



Buds & Blossoms

Newsletter of the Acton Garden Club

President's Message

Summer 2009 Edition

Happy Summer Days Acton Garden Club!

The Club has certainly been busy! Our summer newsletter features many activities club members have been involved in since our last newsletter came out in February. Within these pages you'll hear about Flora in Winter, the Newport Flower Show, Awards, Gardening with Young People, Civic Beautification, our Horticulture and Floral Design Study Groups, Ways and Means and much more.

We look back at some of the fun we had, and we also look forward to many new activities for sharing and learning. The Federation's Flower Show School, Landscape Design School, and Environmental School occur in September, October, and November and offer many opportunities to plant those seeds of knowledge and grow the future. Check the Federation website at www.gcfm.org to find out more.

Consider subscribing to the Federation's Mayflower publication or National Garden Clubs, Inc., National Gardener magazine. They have information and applications for upcoming schools, the GCFM fall conference and other meetings. Subscriptions are offered at incredibly low rates (see the back of your AGC yearbook for more info).

Enjoy your reading in these warm days of summer!

Awards

Submitted by Joan Yatteau, President

In keeping with its long history of achievement, the Acton Garden Club received a bundle of awards at the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation in June. As Awards Chair, Maureen Christmas prepared books of evidence and applied for these awards. She definitely deserves the award for Champion Awards Chair!

The Club received both a national and a state Certificate of Merit for the update of our club history, 'Acton Garden Club, 1934-2009, 75th Anniversary Retrospective.' Virginia Hahn, Maureen Christmas, Judy Shuppert, Karin Victor and all who helped with its production and distribution are to be congratulated on this milestone achievement.



The Club also received both the national and state Certificate of Merit for our Annual Report. Pulling together all these reports and putting them into a cohesive whole is a huge job, but one that is very important for documenting the broad scope of the work of the Club each year. Congratulations to our Recording Secretary, Joan Gardner, for a job well done.

Our Horticulture Study Group received the Helen Freidberg Certificate of Merit from the state for a member-led series of horticulture programs in 'The Home Landscape' and 'In the Garden.' Due to an overlap between the Federation's award year and the Club's program year, this award spans portions of two different Horticulture Study Group series of presentations. Thank you, Judy Dembsey, for your leadership and many thanks to all the presenters. We always learn so much.

GCFM Awards Presentation:
President Joan Yatteau receives ten awards for the Acton Garden Club from Federation President Celeste Wilson, at the GCFM Annual Meeting, June 4, 2009.

We also received both a national and a state Publicity Press Book Award. Congratulations and thanks go to Susanne Fuller for her hard work writing up and submitting articles for publicity then clipping them and assembling the press book. Thanks also to all who sent her clippings about the Club's activities and had a hand in those activities.

In addition, we received the state award for our 2008-2009 75th Anniversary Yearbook. Congratulations and thanks to Judy Shuppert, who did the technical work on the yearbook and to the entire committee for pulling together, checking and rechecking detail after detail. It really is a tribute to an impressive array of projects and activities in which the Club is involved.

Our Junior Gardeners program received a national Certificate of Commendation for Youth Horticulture Education and a state Certificate of Merit for an outstanding program for twelve junior gardeners from ages 4 to 14. Many, many thanks to Pam Nelson and to all parents, grandparents and junior gardeners who participated in and so obviously enjoyed Junior Gardeners activities.

Congratulations and hats off to all who did the wonderful work that garnered these awards!

Floral Design

Submitted by Thelma Shoneman, Director Floral Concerns

The Newport Flower Show, June 26, 27, 28, *Glorious Green*, was truly a spectacular show! **Congratulations** go to Maureen Christmas; she won 2 blue ribbons and 4 top awards. She was awarded **The Bettie Bearden Parade Award** for an outstanding design using all fresh plant material grown and arranged by the exhibitor. The Class title was **green BOUNTY**.



Class 8 entitled **green STAKES** called for a horizontal design expressing resilient beauty of our natural world; Maureen chose the Rain Forest and received the **Corinne Clarke Reynolds Trophy** for the best interpretation of a selected Design Class. For this stunning design she also won the **Garden Club of America Award of Distinction in Flower arrangement** and **The National Garden Club Award** presented to the exhibit judged to be the finest in the Design Division. Congratulations, Maureen.

Thelma Shoneman entered a class entitled **green GEOMETRY** calling for design including a pave element interpreting a season; she chose Winter and won a 2nd place ribbon.

MORE FLOWER SHOWS FOR SUMMER FUN!

The Barnstable County Fair is July 17 – July 25th. ***Flash Back, Fast Forward*** celebrates the 30th anniversary of the show.

Summer Sizzle will be presented at the **Marshfield Fair** from August 21-30 on Route 3A in Marshfield.

COMING IN THE FALL!

Think about entering the **Topsfield Fair** Design Division entitled ***Special Days to Green Up***. Some class titles are Martin Luther King Day, Graduation Day, Grandparents Day and Memorial Day. There are 3 entry days and the Fair runs October 2 – 12.

FLORAL DESIGN FALL PROJECTS:

COLLECT INTERESTING DRIED FLOWERS !

In October the floral design project will be a plaque. We plan to create an arrangement on a panel and you will need dried plant material suitable for gluing including dried flowers, lichen, bark and small vines. **For Holly Days at Tower Hill, November 27 through January 3**, a committee will decorate a 7 1/2' evergreen tree with all dried and natural materials. The theme for the display is ***Winter holidays around the world***. We are looking for a theme/festival to incorporate underwater and shells and allowing us to use plant material of all shapes and sizes. Please e-mail ***any ideas*** to Thelma Shoneman at tshoneman@verizon.net. Have fun collecting! We'll see you in the Fall.



Flora in Winter 2009

Submitted by Maureen Christmas, Nominating/Gardening with Young People

The theme for Tower Hill was “Romantic Celebrations Around the World”. Maureen Christmas designed a Las Vegas Wedding, below left. On the right, Laura Lindop interpreted Romance as Romeo and Juliet. She connected two containers representing the feuding families with orchids threaded on bear grass, symbolizing the fated love.



Civic Beautification

Submitted by Sue Nordhausen and Jean Lane, Co-Chairs

April, May, June and July SHOWERS did bring lots and lots of FLOWERS!! And we are glad how it turned out, basically that nothing drowned in the 30 barrels, two horse troughs, two elongated planters and the oval in front of the town hall. It was a bit touchy at first with the cool and the wet, and several replacements were necessary, but once all was established the plants just “took off.”

You all may have noticed that there is a definite pink theme through much of the town, in celebration of our club’s 75th anniversary year. The Acton Garden Club’s special flower is the double pink petunia, and the pink petunias spilling out of the Acton Center trough and the West Acton merchants and the various fire station barrels are designed to commemorate this. To add a little variety the West Acton trough is again done in the yellow Tuberous Begonias, Silk Stocking Coleus, Bluebell Browalia and the two shades of Sweet Potato Vine. The elongated planters in front of the town hall have a red and white theme to coordinate with the flag buntings that often hang in the front.



Civic Beautification, continued...

A special effort was made to pull together previous years plantings in the oval in front of the town hall. Many survived beautifully since this area is heavy with perennials, but needed sorting out by color, size, and height to create a balanced more formal look. We added two formal urns with purple flowering Cat Mint and Scaevola to add needed height and interest. Embedded in this garden there is a very nice granite stone engraved with the information that this garden was presented to the town in commemoration of the club's 50th anniversary, in 1984. This marker is now flanked by Silver Mound and is behind very low lying Lamb's Ear, so is easily seen.

In the fall, the current plan is to raise the level of this special oval garden to correspond to the height of the surrounding lawn, which was raised when the town installed the new drive and crosswalk in front of town hall. Dean Charter and I have discussed the timing, and it will probably be in October. We will be forming a special sub.-committee of Civic Beautification to think about any redesigning of the garden when this is done.



Special thanks to all who contributed their time with planting, watering, and mulching to help make Acton beautiful. These would include Civic Beautification members: Joan Gardner, Susan Harrigan, Ann Leary, Pat Kosiki, Bev Shorey, Sharon Gruet, Diane Williams, Thelma Shoneman, Stephanie Reid, Pam Nelson, Celia Lionetta. Sam Wasfy, Phyllis McDonough, Carole Ward, Mike Svoboda, Peggy Garrison and Gay Rose. Along with members at large who have helped with the summer watering: Janet Richards, Martin Alvarez, Bev. Brownson, Noreen Rowe, Karin Victor and Doris Prendiville

We hope you are all enjoying your summer and thank you for entrusting us with the leadership to help make Acton beautiful.

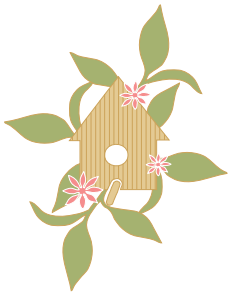
Website Updated

Submitted by Karin Victor, Technical Liaison

The website has been updated with the new yearbook's information and there are a few new additions to the Club's website. On the main page of our website you will find a link to a virtual pictorial tour of each of the 6 six gardens featured on our June "Garden Sights and Floral Delights" garden tour.

Also on the main page is an updated link to the redesigned Lyme Disease Petition. This new page contains a link to both the petition as well as several resources for additional information. Those links include the Town's website, the CDC, the MA State website, American Lyme Disease Foundation, and the Lyme Disease Association.

I hope you enjoy exploring the site.



Horticulture Study Group

Submitted by Judy Dembsey, Chairman

FALL PROGRAM

- September 22-“Yoga for the Gardener” (Learn to loosen up your gardening muscles.)
- October 13-“Tour of the Dam House in Acton” and” Perennial Plant Exchange” (Bob Johnson will take us on a tour of his home on Concord Road.)
- November 10-“Using Stone in the Garden” (See how stone provides ornamental aspects to your landscape.)

FALL CROCUSES

Spring and Summer provide bountiful amounts of flowers but little in the fall. Spark-up your garden with vibrant bursts of color this September and October with fall crocuses.

They are not related to the spring-flowering crocuses (*Crocus*). The fall crocuses (*Colchicum*) send up their flowers first and foliage later. The stems can be 2-12 inches tall with flowers that are comparatively large in white or various shades of pink to purple. Order or purchase your colchicums now. Plant them 4 to 6 inches deep in July or August. They're hardy here and require good drainage in all seasons; thrive preferably in light shade but can be grown in sun given midday shade. Best of all they are critter proof, containing the poisonous alkaloid colchicines. In the spring, colchicums produce wide green leaves that can be unattractive as the foliage turn yellow. Therefore, plant them between or behind daylilies, hostas, hardy geraniums or other late emerging plants to hide the foliage. Besides local garden centers, colchicums may be purchased through catalogs at: Brent and Becky's Bulbs, 7900 Daffodil Lane, Gloucester, VA 23061; McClure & Zimmerman, Box 368, Friesland, WI 53935; and Odyssey Bulbs, 8984 Meadow Lane, Berrien Springs MI 49103 catalog \$1.00. Adapted from an article in: *The Avant Gardner, June 2009*

75th Anniversary Events Planned

Submitted by Joan Yatteau, President



The Acton Garden Club rounds out its year-long 2009 celebration of its 75th Anniversary year by sponsoring two events free of charge for the local community. On the evening of Wednesday, Sept. 23, Peter Alden, a naturalist and lecturer who has his finger on the pulse of the local environment, will present an entertaining and informative slide and lecture program entitled 'Challenges in Conservation' in the spacious Faulkner Room of the Acton Town Hall. The evening begins with light refreshments at 7:00 followed by our program at 7:30 pm. We'll wrap-up our 75th Anniversary celebration with a wonderful floral design and decorating program featuring seasonal designs that can transition from November through December holidays. Club members will present our program on the evening of Tuesday, Nov. 10 at St. Matthew's Church. See www.ActonGardenClub.org for more information.

Two Teachers' Grants Awarded

Submitted by Joan Yatteau, President

This year the Acton Garden Club awarded grants to two Acton elementary school teachers as part of our annual Teacher's Grant program. A Conant and a Merriam School teacher each happily received the grants for their projects.

At Conant "Worms, Seeds and Growing" project activities in Loretta Crumlish's kindergartner class included up-close hands-on learning about worms and their importance in our environment using various books, a Worm Vue Wonders Kit, a Drumlin Farm Outreach program and pots, soil and seeds, all supported by the Acton Garden Club grant of nearly \$250. Loretta very kindly sent us some pictures of the kindergartners enjoying the project.

Karen Sonner's Merriam School project will create a program for every grade level at the school utilizing the Outdoor Classroom to help students connect with, understand and appreciate the natural world. The Club's grant of a bit over \$250 is supporting 28 individual hand lenses and 28 copies of Tree Finder: A Manual for the Identification of Trees by Their Leaves. Surrounded by teachers and students Joan and Sue congratulate Merriam School Principal Ed Kaufman on Karen's grant-winning project, "The Big Backyard."

Each fall, the Acton Garden Club solicits project proposals from Acton teachers for our Teachers' Grant award program. A total of \$500 is available to be awarded each year.



Left to right Susan Bricker, Chair of the Acton Garden Club's Teachers' Grant award committee, and President Joan Yatteau congratulate Conant School Kindergarten teacher Loretta Crumlish with Principal Christine Price.



Left to right Karen Sonner, Maryann Ayers, and Principal Ed Kaufman of Merriam School gladly accept the Teachers' Grant award from Joan Yatteau and Susan Bricker, with students Sophie, Hannah, Thomas, Quinn, Taylor and Alex.

2009 Scholarship Winner Announced

Submitted by Joan Yatteau, President

Veronica Gassert is the happy recipient of AGC's \$1000 2009 scholarship. At the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School's Awards Program on the evening of June 2nd, President Joan Yatteau presented Veronica with the Club's award letter and congratulated her on being accepted at Northeastern University. Veronica has an outstanding record of involvement in community service. She has participated in the Concord Crop Walk, received the ABRHS Community Service Award, is a member of the National Honor Society, and a well-rounded student athlete. She was an intern, teaching environmental science workshops for children in the summer of 2008 and worked with the Paul Goldman Organization for the Assabet River. We congratulate her and wish her well as she enters college in the fall.

Gardening with Young People

Submitted by Sharon Gruet, Co-Chair

In May Co-chairs Maureen Christmas and Sharon Gruet worked with ABRHS teenagers in the *Best Buddies Program* to plant and beautify the area around the William L. O'Connell monument. The garden surrounds the boulder and bronze plaque that dedicates the grounds of the R.J. Grey Junior High, the Acton-Boxborough High School, McCarthy-Towne and other education-related facilities as an Educational Park honoring William O'Connell, Teacher and Superintendent in the Town for nearly thirty years. This was the first project of the Club's newly reactivated Gardening with Young People program.

The Gardening with Young People program is designed to meet four times a year with different groups of young people from the Acton-Boxborough Community who are invited to participate in a hands-on educational project involving one of a number of interests such as horticulture, floral design, conservation, civic beautification, and garden therapy. The Gardening with Young People program provides assistance and funding, if necessary. In the past, the committee has worked with Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies, schools, and the Acton Memorial Library children's department in numerous and varied educational activities.



Public Health Lyme Disease Action Workgroup

Submitted by Joan Yatteau, President

The Club's petition campaign asking the Acton Board of Selectmen to take action against Lyme Disease in our community has been highly successful. As part of the Town's effort, a public health workgroup concerning Lyme Disease education, prevention and mitigation is being formed. Its first meeting is scheduled Tuesday, August 18th, 7:00-8:30 pm. The location will be announced. All are welcome to attend.



Programs

Submitted by Susan Harrigan and Joan Gardner, Co-Chairs

A fun-filled, exciting year is planned for Acton Garden Club! Our main objective has been to eliminate slide shows and have a more hands-on, animated feel to the meetings. We have also moved our workshop/luncheon location to the Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church. With this new location comes a better price and floor plan (everything is on one level) . The custodian will totally be in charge of set-up and set-down, so you will not have to lift a table or chair. So watch for your August delivery of the Year-book, you will be in for a wonderful treat!

Floral Design Study Group

Submitted by Sally Patrick, Chairperson

Our next meeting will be October 20, 2009 at 9:15 am at St. Matthew's Church, 435 Central Street, Acton. We will be making a design by gluing dried plant material onto a panel which we will provide. As you enjoy the rest of your summer, you might want to gather plant material such as lichen, bark and small flowers that would be suitable for gluing. Keep your eyes open as you stroll through your garden or along wooded paths. You can always check out your neighbor's garden too-with permission, of course!

Ways and Means: Head for TEN!

Submitted by Stephanie Reid and Mike Svoboda

Are your perennials crowding each other like weekday commuters on the Red Line? Have they grown so much in height and width that you can no longer see over them or the ground between? Are these colossal plants floppy, entwining and leaning, creating a dense fortress like flowerbed? Are these predators moving out of their allotted space and trying to invade your lawn, other flowerbeds, and obliterating the walkways? Frankly, and let's be honest with ourselves, are they out of control? The Spring/Summer rains have created a bloom of huge plants that are in a tussle for your yard!

Now is the time to think ahead about handling these bullies. Mark those predatory thugs, look straight at them, make note of their size, color, and bloom time (without being seduced by their vigor!!). You can get control of your garden! You will discipline them back into shape: next spring when it's time to divide for our Annual Plant Sale. You will be happy with the results and the plants will be happy to have been civilized.

