

Willowwood Journal

A Publication of the Willowwood Foundation
P.O. Box 1295, Morristown, New Jersey 07962-1295

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Spring 1993

FOUNDATION INITIATES NEWSLETTER

The Willowwood Foundation has initiated a newsletter to stimulate support for the development of Willowwood Arboretum and to inform the public about the Foundation and the projects it is supporting. The newsletter is targeted to those who have generously supported the Foundation in the past and those organizations who are likely to qualify for financial support from the Foundation in the future. The Foundation's Board also hopes that by promoting communication the quality of grant applications also will improve.

The Willowwood Foundation was established by Dr. Benjamin Blackburn and Mr. Russell W. Myers in 1960 under Chapter 1 of Title 15 of the Revised Statutes of New Jersey. The Foundation received generous bequests from its founders as well as donations from others who recognize the important role Willowwood Arboretum plays as New Jersey's oldest functioning Arboretum.

The Willowwood Foundation was established to receive, hold and administer property and assets for the advancement of the following objectives:

- *To develop and extend knowledge about plants, both native and of other parts of the world, and about various aspects of plant science.
- *To promote and conduct instruction in plant science.
- *To promote and foster literature and publications with respect to plant science.
- *To promote and maintain collections of books, periodicals, monographs, and libraries

related to plant science.

- *To develop and maintain herbaria and living collections of plants.
- *To acquire and maintain other facilities related to plant studies.
- *To foster and disseminate knowledge of plants and plant science and to foster an appreciation of plants and the need to conserve these

resources.

- *To undertake and sustain educational, literary and research activities related to animals and natural science.
- *To assist with gifts and to cooperate in fostering municipal, county, state and national projects related to the preservation of land and the conservation of natural resources.

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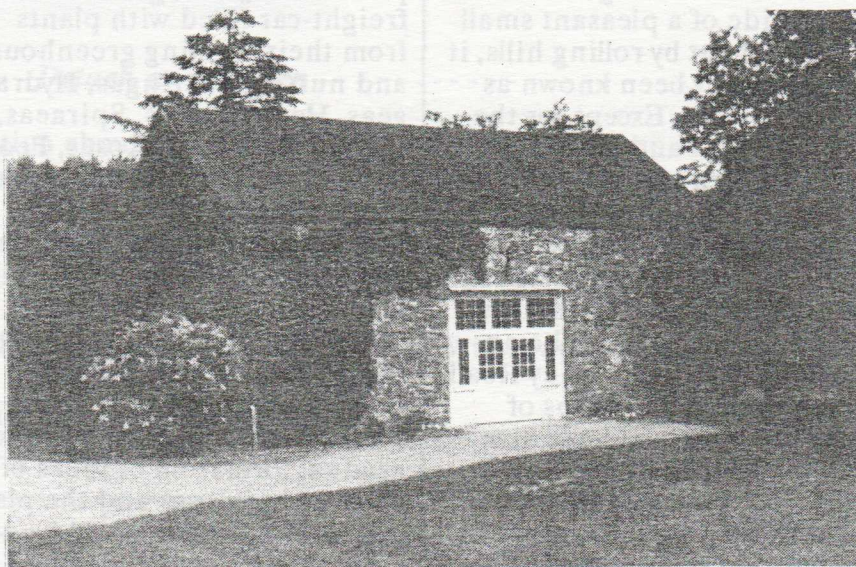
Foundation Funds Visitor's Center to Honor Myers

The Willowwood Foundation provided a grant of \$20,000.00 to the Morris County Park Commission for completion of the first phase of the Russell W. Myers Visitor Center at Willowwood Arboretum.

The Center is dedicated to Russell W. Myers, former Foundation President and

Director of the Morris County Park Commission.

The Center preserves two historic barns at Willowwood Arboretum and provides space for educational programs. The barrier-free design accommodates visitors with special needs.



The historic Kennady Barn was officially opened on April 16, 1992, as the first phase of the Russell W. Myers Visitors Center.

Willowwood's Past Revealed in Blackburn Papers - Paradise Found!

While working on the Estate of the late Russell W. Myers, the Executor came across the following account of Willowwood's history written by Dr. Benjamin Blackburn in the early 1960's and annotated in his own writing. We thought it was an appropriate article for the first edition of "Willowwood Journal."

Willowwood Farm had its beginning in 1908, when Henry Welles Tubbs and Robert Hamilton Tubbs decided - after many weekends and vacations given over to walking trips and excursions from New York City - that the hills and valleys of northern central New Jersey appealed to them most as a place to resume life in the country. Their parents, Carrie Ladd Welles and Benjamin Tubbs, came to visit at the farm the first spring after the transfer had been made, and they never went back to live at their home at Kingston, Pennsylvania. The Wyoming Valley property was sold, and the parents' visit lengthened out to the end of their lives.

The farm comprises about 140 acres, lying mostly in Morris County, but spreading in its southeastern portion into Somerset. Extending over the eastern side of a pleasant small valley set about by rolling hills, it had previously been known as Paradise Farm. Except for the thick Chestnut and Oak woods on the western hill, the farm was cleared and in cultivated fields and pastureland, and the slope to the east was a Peach orchard. Five massive Horse Chestnuts framed the house, and the approach from Hacklebarney Road was dominated by groups of Weeping Willows of huge size along the brook. These trees made such a distinct introduction to the place that it was decided to change the name to Willowwood Farm.

As in the case of the American Chestnuts so abundant in the

hardwood forest of the western hill, the Willows were living under a menacing cloud, for within two decades all these trees had succumbed to imported diseases, and none of the originals remains. A third-generation scion from the Weeping Willows is growing vigorously, however, and many other kinds of these trees have been introduced - some less susceptible, very fortunately, to the ravages of the canker pathogens. (Three other kinds of Chestnuts grow well, but the American continues only as suckers or sprouts of no more than a few years' duration).

During the early years, many fruit trees were planted. These were mostly Apples, Pears, and Peaches, and quite a few nut trees. Harison Yellow Roses, a Kerria, and a White Lilac were brought from the old home garden at Kingston, and a few Canada Hemlock seedlings from the mountains near Noxon where holidays had been spent at Grandfather Tubbs' summer cabin. A very impressive gift from long-time friends arrived early in the spring of 1911, when the Benjamin Dorrance family of Dorranceton, now a part of Kingston, sent an entire freight-car filled with plants from their thriving greenhouses and nursery. Syringas, Hydrangeas, Honeysuckles, Spiraeas, Forsythias, Lilacs, Roses, Peonies, Plantain-lilies, and various conifers arrived in exciting wagon-loads transferred from the Lackawanna Station in Gladstone.

Coming after the first months of clearing tangles of Blackberries and other aggressors at the back of the house, and the gradual formation of ideas of how the buildings and the plantings around them would be developed, this munificent gift could not have arrived at a better time - though it did reduce early-season work on the farm to

a minimum until these new plants had been settled, either in places where it was decided they would stay, or in temporary nursery areas until the permanent scheme could be worked out. This Dorrance gift soon took the form of masses of flowering shrubs along the driveway, hedges to outline lawn areas, and enclosure plantings around the space north of the house - all of which took shape with sturdy groups of these hardy and tested favorites.

It can be imagined that a most important effect of this extensive planting project in 1911 and 1912 was that it made the entire family particularly aware of the part being played by ornamental plants in their environment at Willowwood. Henry and Robert had been enthusiastic gardeners at Kingston, and friends would stop by to see what the Tubbs boys had growing in their water garden (made by sinking the halves of a huge cask, brought by a Ballantine brewery wagon, and laboriously sawed in two) and the "tropical garden" around it. Their enthusiasm for trees and virtually all kinds of plants went along with keen and studied interests in many other fields, but over the years, horticulture gained dominance.

Special items in the early plantings were often brought out from the markets in lower Manhattan by Robert Tubbs when he arrived on a Friday afternoon train for the weekend on the farm. In this way, the original Bald Cypress at the edge of the pool, the Blue Atlas Cedars and the Dwarf Alberta Spruces started on their rewarding careers. The family would wait with eagerness to see if Robert had found another dwarf conifer for the Japanese garden taking shape around the Cypress Pool, or some other treasure he had spotted at the market.

Gardening friends and horticulturists contributed much to the developing plantings, and there were heated arguments about composition and design with Martha Brookes Hutcheson, neighbor at Merchiston Farm to the west. Correspondence with E. H. Wilson at the Arnold Arboretum led to visits and obtaining plants and propagating material of several choice items in the 1920's - notably the original specimens of Chinese Lacebark Pine, Waterlily Magnolia, and Chinese House Lemon. This last has been found in a remote interior valley of Province Wilson told them, grown in courtyards and on windowsills, to provide a fresh fruit during the long winters, and it has been grown at Willowwood for this same reason, as well as for the beautifully fragrant flowers. (Oddly enough, this distinctive selection of a dwarf, delicately-flavored Lemon amenable to culture in a pot does not seem to be recorded at the Arnold Arboretum, nor specifically noted in Plantae Wilsonianae, the account of the plants collected by E. H. Wilson).

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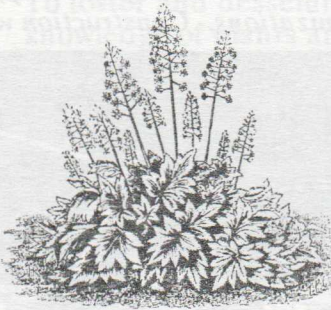
Foundation Supports International Seed Exchange

According to Ellyn Meyers, Superintendent of Horticulture at Willowwood Arboretum, the Arboretum's first seed exchange has been an incredible success, attracting requests from institutions such as the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew; the Arboretum of the Chinese Academy of Forestry in Beijing, China; the Louis Pasteur Botanic Garden in Strasbourg, France; the Botanical Department of the Hungarian Museum in Budapest, Hungary; the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel; the National In-

stitute of Vegetables, Ornamental Crops and Tea in Aro, Japan; Linnaeus' Uppsala University in Uppsala, Sweden and forty other public gardens worldwide.

Additionally, most of these institutions have graciously sent their seed lists which should greatly benefit the development of the plant collections of Willowwood Arboretum.

Previously, international requests for seed of New Jersey plants were routed to public gardens in New York and Pennsylvania.



Foundation Donors Receive Plant Dividend

As a token of appreciation, donors to the Willowwood Foundation are entitled to a plant dividend. The plant selected this year is a cultivar of the native foamflower, Tiarella cordifolia 'Slick rock', a wonderful fast spreading groundcover for shady locations.

Donors may pick up their plants on the rear porch of the Tubbs House following the Willowwood Open House on Sunday, May 16, 1993. Invitations to this special day will be mailed to donors in early April, but mark your calendar now!

----- Detach and Return -----

- YES, I am interested in information about The Willowwood Foundation. Please send an application form and information.
- YES, I would like to support the work of The Willowwood Foundation. Enclosed is my tax exempt donation of \$ _____.
- YES, I would like information about volunteer opportunities at Willowwood Arboretum.
- YES, I would like to receive future issues of this newsletter.

Name _____
 Address _____
 Post Office _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Please complete the information above and return this request to:
 The Secretary, The Willowwood Foundation, P.O. Box 1295, Morristown, NJ 07962-1295

Foundation Initiates Newsletter

(continued from page 1)

Traditionally grants range between \$500.00 and \$5,000.00 to any one applicant each year. The Foundation prefers to fund challenge grants through non-profit organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service. Innovative projects which serve as a model to others are given priority.

Applications are received annually between June 15 and September 15 and grants are made by December 15 each year. Recipients are expected to submit a final report on their project and to acknowledge the support of the Foundation.

For an application form and additional information, complete and return the form on page 3.



Willowwood Open House Sunday, May 16, 1993

*Plant Sale - Plant Auction - Tours
Sponsored by the Friends of The
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
Phone (201) 326-7603 for details*

Foundation Grants Funds Book on New Jersey Ferns

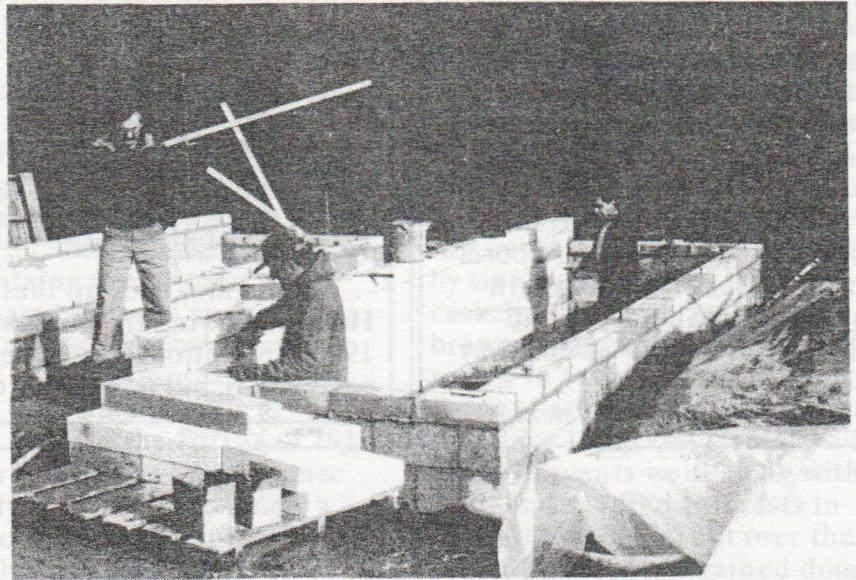
A \$1,500.00 grant from the Willowwood Foundation to Rutgers University enabled completion of the much anticipated New Jersey Ferns and Fern Allies (Rutgers University Press) by James D. Montgomery and David E. Fairbrothers.

The book takes readers on a fascinating horticultural tour, including eighty-three species in thirty genera. The book is an essential field guide and reference for naturalists, ecologists,

botanists, hikers and gardeners. Of special interest is a remarkable account of the rare curly-grass fern, Schizaea pusilla, "New Jersey's most famous plant."

The Willowwood Foundation has donated copies of the book to the Benjamin Blackburn Research Library at Willowwood Arboretum and the Cross Library at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum.

A new nursery facility, funded in part by a \$10,000.00 grant from the Willowwood Arboretum Foundation, is under development at Willowwood Arboretum. The new facility will assist in distributing choice plants to the nursery industry, public gardens and institutions and organizations. Construction will be completed this Spring.



The Willowwood Foundation
P.O. Box 1295
Morristown, New Jersey 07962-1295

*The Willowwood Foundation
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