



Willowwood Journal

A Publication of the Willowwood Foundation

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CONIFERS FEATURED AT WILLOWWOOD'S FALL FESTIVAL ON SEPTEMBER 7TH

With the decline of the peach orchards, pines and other conifers became a featured landscape planting through the efforts of Robert Hamilton Tubbs after he and his brother purchased a portion of Honelsdale Farms, known as Paradise Farm, in 1908. The plantings of conifers has continued to today.

The Fifth Annual Fall Festival at Willowwood Arboretum will celebrate this legacy with an expanded program, this year celebrated jointly with the American Conifer Society from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 7, 1997 in the Benjamin Blackburn Auditorium in the Stone Barn.

At 2:00 p.m. Dr. David Barnett, Director of Horticulture at the world famous Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts will present a program titled "Large Conifers in the Landscape: Four Seasons of Form and Beauty." Dr. Barnett also previously served as Assistant Director of Planting Fields Arboretum in Oyster Bay Long Island and as Collections Field Crew Leader at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois.

Following Dr. Barnett's presentation, a sale of choice and rare conifers and garden tours will be available.

At 3:45 p.m., former President

of the American Conifer Society, Justin C. "Chub" Harper will present a program on smaller growing conifers which are interesting, noteworthy and under-utilized. These are perfect for the smaller home landscape and like their larger counterparts provide a rich palette of texture and color year round. Some are deer browse resistant, too!

Door prizes and a festive reception in the Tubbs House will conclude the Festival. Reservations are limited for this popular free event and preregistration is recommended by calling (973) 326-7610 (weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 1996-97 GRANTS

In addition to a \$1,200.00 grant for the 1996 Symposium cosponsored with the American Magnolia Society, the Foundation awarded a \$28,880.54 grant to the Morris County Park Commission for the Helen R. Gardiner Propagation Unit at Willowwood Arboretum and a \$1,511.25 grant for the Eger Memorial Garden at The Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morristown, New Jersey.

The Foundation continued support for the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens Metropolitan Flora Project through a \$3,000.00 grant and the North American-China Plant Exploration Consortium through a

\$5,000.00 grant to the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania to collect plants and seed in Jilin Province in Northeastern China.

A grant of \$3,500.00 was provided to the Friends of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum for a symposium titled "Preserving Historical Landscapes - A Study of Country Place Era Gardens" which also served as a benefit for the restoration of noted Landscape Architect Martha Brookes Hutcheson's Garden at Merchiston Farm. Video tapes of the Symposium are available from the

(continued on page 3)



This specimen of Dawn Redwood is perhaps the most notable conifer growing at Willowwood.

Good News for New Jersey by H. K. Morse

Editor's Note: Past editions of Willowood Journal published manuscripts about the history of Willowood Arboretum by those who knew it best - Henry Tubbs and Ben Blackburn! This edition contains an unpublished article written in 1940 by their dear friend and noted horticulturist and author Harriet K. Morse of New York City who wrote Gardening in the Shade (1939, Charles Scribner's Sons). These manuscripts provide important insight into the vision which inspired Henry Tubbs to donate Willowood Farm as a public arboretum.

The arboretum idea is spreading! Someday, a long chain of these gardens will stretch throughout the country, that people may learn more and more easily about the choicest plant materials available for their own gardens.

What exactly is an arboretum? It is a garden of trees, woody shrubs and vines, which though serving as a park, has a very definite function. It serves, like the botanic garden, an educational purpose, though its scope is less wide. It does not as a rule concern itself with perennial and annual flowering plants which die to the ground in winter. Seeds of these may, in search of a good home, be so impressed by this garden, that they will of their own accord find a suitable spot, settle down and make themselves at home - welcome wildings!

Let us tell about the latest in-embryo-arboretum. It's a gift from two gentlemen in New Jersey.

Crossing the Hudson from New York City and driving due west for about twenty-five miles one comes to a beautiful section of New Jersey. We pass Morristown's Historic Park with its wild flower trails and old fences lined with currant bushes and sweetbriar roses. We drive on over rolling green hills - no billboards, no refreshment stands - just well groomed country-side. In the heart of these unspoiled Far Hills, as they are called, is a small town named Gladstone. We turn into a country lane labeled "Hacklebarney Road" (just off the state highway) and this leads us into "Willowood". Here lies an estate with undulating contours and long distant views of far away hills. There is intimacy, there is atmosphere, and the great trees speak well for the taste and knowledge of those responsible for their planting years ago.

Here is where New Jersey is going to have its arboretum!

This lovely old domain is the home of two brothers, Henry and Robert Tubbs, who, long interested in the art of the garden, have developed portions of their property for their own pleasure and that of their many friends. For years they have nurtured the hope that some day their estate should be turned over to the public for recreation and study. To this end they have sought contact with experts in the world of horticulture, that their plantings might be well directed to form a nucleus for a future arboretum.

Through friendship with the late Ernest Wilson, the great plant explorer, they have acquired newly introduced plant material, and advice on matters pertaining to their gardens. Other rare gifts come to them from plantsmen who are acquainted with their aims, and so these gardens become increasingly interesting.

With characteristic generosity the Messrs. Tubbs have now offered their land of one hundred and thirty-two acres to the public, with the proviso that during their lifetime they retain the homestead and a few acres for their private use. The property has been placed in the worthy custody of the Trustees of Rutgers - the State University of New Jersey at New Brunswick, not far away. The formal acceptance of this trust will be acknowledged when the endowment fund of \$100,000.00 has been raised.

The idea of an arboretum has met with so much enthusiasm that garden clubs and public-spirited people interested in the commonwealth are wasting no time in gathering up the necessary funds in order that this splendid dream may come true in Gladstone.

Let us imagine a television picture of the future of the Gladstone Arboretum - but first we must realize that before the actual landscape work begins, the scientists must make their

topographical maps and their soil surveys, for there are various types and textures of soil which will influence future planting schemes.

The land immediately surrounding the homestead has been laid out with choice plant materials, and a certain amount of mass planting has been done in outlying sections, but most of the land is as nature furnished, and a pretty good job she has done. Toward the west is a beautiful climax forest of oaks, maples, tulip trees, ironwoods, blue beeches, downy shadbushes, flowering dogwoods, spicebushes, and viburnums, at whose feet grow the natural associates - here ferns and terrestrial orchids - there a fragrant wild grape vine and a blackberry tangle. Along the streams are opportunities for low cascades, over which will bend moisture-loving trees, shrubs and vines. Farther on, a pond may be fashioned, at whose side willows may drape themselves, as they do now along the waterways toward the home. Here appropriate aquatics blend charmingly with a flock of saucy ducks which glide through the water.

One area holds promise for a possible cactus garden. Seas of purple heather and broom will grow in the "Scottish ghyll" nearby. The rich meadowland occupying the center areas may in time contain a fruiticetum, where information will be of value to the fruit farmer.

It takes genius to design an alluring landscape pattern and yet be mindful always of the purpose of an arboretum - to grow specimens of every beautiful and interesting tree, shrub and vine able to be supported in the climate of the locality in question. As rare gifts are offered from near and far, so in time will the pictures become further enriched.

It is interesting to realize that plants which nature systematically groups are esthetically ideal

companions, as for example such a happy trio as grey birch, shining sumac with hayscented ferns. Imagine a hemlock hill with a cascade of mountain laurels, azaleas and rhododendrons blending in perfect harmony.

The boundary fences will be draped with flowering and fruiting vines - vines which screen, vines which twine; vines which scramble and vines which climb! Here too will be demonstrated interesting ideas for hedges and windbreaks, and why some plants are more desirable than others for the purpose. We shall see which plants thrive best in sun and which in shade, which in wind and which in shelter, those that grow by leaps and others which stay in bounds.

There will of course be a definite path system with shaded walks and well placed benches. Every plant in this nature museum must be easy of access. How rich a bridle path would be, for this is a horseman's countryside.

The spring and summer pageant of flowering shrubs will be no more alluring than the autumn carnival of color in leaf, twig and berry - red maples, sassafras, bittersweet, sumac, wild aster and goldenrod.

As for the birds, what a pleasant sanctuary! They will flock from everywhere to enjoy berry feasts, bathing at the water's edge. They will find nesting sites and shelter and will build here their homes.

Many a gardener, baffled by the great number of varieties in

dogwood, viburnum, hawthorn and pine for instance, would earn much by finding these so arranged that they may be compared easily. All specimens must be distinctly labeled with full name and address! Which plants are native, which have been naturalized, which are hybrids and which are not! Pruning lessons may be learned by comparative examples, that we may see at a glance how to and how not to groom our shrubbery.

Today the greatest and most useful of all gardens in America is certainly the Arnold Arboretum, within the city limits of Boston, and under the trusteeship of Harvard University. It started its existence almost seventy years ago with the same acreage and the same endowment as is proposed for the Gladstone project, but the farm land was largely worn out, and public enthusiasm at a low ebb. The Gladstone estate contains fertile and varied soils, and the beautiful plantings, already established by Henry and Robert Tubbs, give this an excellent head start. An arboretum is useful to the scientist for technical studies, and the nurseryman learns about new and improved plant forms. The horticulturist seeks landscape effects, while the forester studies trees for their economic value as lumber.

Here then will gather from everywhere - scientist, designer, nature lover, bird enthusiast, and that large company of people ever eager to see, to learn and to enjoy - the amateur gardener.

Grants (continued from page 1)

Friends of The Frelinghuysen Arboretum. The Symposium provided valuable guidance on how to proceed with the restoration of a historical garden and featured speakers from New Jersey, Colorado, New York and Massachusetts. The symposium also raised \$3,455.59 which will be managed by the Willowwood Foundation to benefit the restoration of the Gardens at Merchiston Farm (Bamboo Brook Outdoor Education Center).

The Morris County Park Commission received a challenge grant of \$3,600.00 for the development of standards and accepted practices to improve the care of the living collection at Willowwood Arboretum and Frelinghuysen Arboretum.

The Tyler Arboretum in Lima, Pennsylvania was awarded a grant of \$3,500.00 for their historic tree propagation program to perpetuate the historically significant legacy of the Painter Brothers who initiated the Arboretum's collections in the mid 1800's.

The Foundation is now receiving grants for its 1997-1998 grant round. The deadline for applications is September 15, 1997. To request an application form, telephone (973) 326-7610 or write: Willowwood Foundation, P.O. Box 1295, Morristown, NJ 07962-1295.

-----*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 _____

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**Please complete the information above and return this request to:
The Willowwood Foundation, P.O. Box 218, Gladstone, NJ 07934-0218.**

WILLOWWOOD FOUNDATION REORGANIZES WITH AN EYE TO THE FUTURE

After six years as President of the Willowwood Foundation, Dr. Edmund Stiles passed the gavel to former Vice President Marshall M. Jeanes of Bedminster Township, New Jersey at the Foundation's Annual Meeting on May 4, 1997. Jeanes and his wife Pam, who is a past President of the Garden Club of Somerset Hills, have been enthusiastic benefactors of many regional horticultural organizations.

Nancy Strong, a close friend of both Ben Blackburn and Russ Myers, and also a former President of the Garden Club of Somerset Hills and past Chairman for Zone IV of the Garden Club of America, succeeded Mr. Jeanes as Vice-

President. With the retirement of Dan Will as Treasurer and Quentin Schlieder as Secretary, the Board elected R. Patterson Warlick as Treasurer and Dr. Jean Marie Hartman as Secretary.

The Foundation has enjoyed significant growth during the years that Dr. Stiles served as President. Notable were significant fund raising efforts for the Myers Visitors Center, the Willowwood Arboretum Nursery and The Helen R. Gardiner Plant Propagation Unit.

The annual Fall Symposium, now in its fifth year, and the Annual Lilac Party fundraiser also were established during his tenure.

The Willowwood Foundation is a non-profit educational organization incorporated in the State of New Jersey which was established to nurture an appreciation for and a knowledge of botany, horticulture and the natural world through its support of public education, the publication of, and access to, literature relating to plant science and the development of facilities to promote use, access and information about native and exotic plants.

The Willowwood Foundation
P.O. Box 218
Gladstone, New Jersey 07934-0218

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Nancy Strong, Vice President
Dr. Jean Marie Hartman, Secretary
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LOTUS POOL RESTORED IN MEMORY OF HARRY S. ALLEN

The Lea and Harry Allen Family Fund of the Community Foundation of New Jersey has provided a \$5,000.00 grant for the restoration of the Lotus Pool in memory of Harry S. Allen. The lotus pool was originally designed and constructed by Robert Hamilton Tubbs probably in the 1920's.

The restoration under the supervision of Horticultural Superintendent Fred Spicer envisions enhanced visual and visitor access to this little known feature which was secreted by the lush growth of Ostrich Ferns. The design maintains the oriental style of the gardens east of the Tubbs House and will provide a stone bench for quiet meditation.

In presenting this generous gift, Mrs. Allen notes "for many, many reasons, Willowwood became a treasured place to us in past years and we hope that many more people will enjoy this little corner of the garden."



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