



◆ Willowwood Journal ◆

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Spring, 2009

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
KNOWLEDGE OF
BOTANY,
HORTICULTURE
AND THE
NATURAL WORLD
THROUGH ITS
SUPPORT OF THE
PUBLIC
EDUCATION, THE
PUBLICATION OF,
AND ACCESS TO,
LITERATURE
RELATING TO
PLANT SCIENCE
AND THE
DEVELOPMENT
OF FACILITIES TO
PROMOTE, USE,
AND ACCESS
INFORMATION
ABOUT NATIVE
AND EXOTIC
PLANTS.



“Lilac Party” Sunday, May 17

The Willowwood Foundation hosts its 14th Annual *Lilac Party* Celebration and the question is always what to wear? Depending on Mother Nature and Spring’s perverse sense of humour, either wellies and down vests or colorful spring garb is the fashion trend. “But we have never cancelled the *Lilac Party* – the sun always comes out, even if there is a shower or two beforehand”, commented Anne Peterson, Bernardsville, long time *Lilac Party* Chair, who has turned over the festivity planning to her daughter, also a Willowwood Trustee, Kristen Krag, Far Hills, this year.

“Mary Bartow, Far Hills, was the original chairperson and developed this wonderful party. She had been to Ben’s parties which were held under the lilacs and thought this would be a perfect fundraiser for the foundation” noted Kristen. The festive parties given by Dr. Ben Blackburn, noted botanist and adopted son of Henry and Robert Tubbs, in the 1950s and early 60’s, (which are still talked about in many Somerset Hills homes!), the *Lilac Party* (now under a tent) celebrates the coming of Spring. The party’s reputation of wonderful music presented by the talented men’s a cappella group “The Ten”, unusual libations and wines provided by Chris Cree, 56 degree wine, and tempting hors d’oeuvres in a flower filled setting gathers together many Somerset Hills residents to enjoy the beauty and fragrance of lilacs in bloom. This much adored *Lilac Garden Party* tradition continues on Sunday, May 17th at the Willowwood Arboretum, rain or shine.

Advance Reservations to the *Lilac Party* are required. For ticket information, call the Willowwood Foundation at 908 234 1815 or email wwfoundation@earthlink.net.

Magnolias...

in bloom now!

Magnolias were a favorite of the Tubbs and Ben Blackburn and continue to be popular at Willowwood today. Flowering begins in early spring with *M. kobus* and *M. stellata* species and hybrids, which are followed by several cultivars of *M. x soulangiana*. Early summer brings the flowering of our native *M. acuminata*, and *M. virginiana*, of which several original specimens remain, as well as *M. sieboldii* from Japan and the large-leaved *M. tripetala* and *M. macrophylla* from the Southern Appalachians. Recently there has been interest among magnolia fanciers in locating cold-tolerant selections of the evergreen ...

Continued page 2

“Mothers Day at Willowwood”

Sunday, May 10 The Willowwood Arboretum, 300 Longview Rd., Chester, celebrates grandmothers, mothers, aunts and daughters on May 10, Mother’s Day. Escort your favorite lady on a visit to Willowwood – Morris County’s hidden treasure. A perfect spot for family photos, stroll midst the spring gardens and see the incredible lilac collection at the height of its beauty and fragrance. Specially chosen lilacs can be purchased as a gift. Self guided tours. Noon to Four; Cost is free. For more information, call 908-234-1815 or visit www.morrisparks.org. Willowwood is open daily, *Free to the Public*.

CHERRIES: Plan your visit now to enjoy the flowering cherries that line the lane through the Lilac Collection and Orchard. Enjoy the blossoms of the pinkish-white Yoshino Cherry in mid April, the medium pink Sargent Cherry in late April, and the dark pink double ‘Kwanzan’ cherry in early May. For a taste of the rare and unusual, be sure to not to miss the ‘Asagi’ Japanese Cherry with apple-green double flowers on the Holly Lawn.

Lilac Party Traditions:

Master of Wine, Chris Cree of 56° Wine: A favorite *Lilac Party* tradition is the Spring Wine Tasting hosted by Master of Wine, Chris Cree and 56 degree wine, Bernardsville, featuring down to earth, authentic, affordable wines produced by small family wineries that handcraft their wines in a truly artesian manner. Chris has commented that wine "can capture a specific place and time... and is an experience, a group of friends sharing a moment...and making a connection with a time, place and a way of life", again commemorating the wonderful soirees hosted by Dr. Blackburn.

The Ten:

Anyone who has heard the men's a cappella chorus "**The Ten**" at a *Lilac Party* walks away with a lilt in their step and a song in their heart! Renown in Somerset Hills, members of the University Glee Club of New York are directed by Richard McGlynn of Far Hills, and entertain with an eclectic repertoire of ballads, spirituals, traditional folk sound contemporary and Broadway musical selections which have brought resounding accolades from their audience. From 'Too Darn Hot' to 'Ramblin' Boy', 'Train' and 'So Long, It's Been Good To Know You' their harmonies will leave the listener 'Signed, Sealed, Delivered' to "**The Ten**" forever.

Silent Auction:

Kristen Krag, Ray Rogers and John Morse, Manager of Horticulture, have assembled a selection of very desirable plants – some from the Willowwood Arboretum Collection and some chosen to appeal to the plant lover as well as to the unusual plant collector. All proceeds generated by this annual fundraiser support Arboretum restoration and garden projects.



Tubbs' House and Gardens: Rarely open, the original residence, dating from 1783, is filled with antiques and will be on view. Open as well are the Spring planted gardens including The Willowwood Lilac Collection of unusual and fragrant varieties from China, Korea, Japan and France. As a remembrance of a wonderful garden party, each party goer receives a specially chosen syringa (lilac) plant for their garden, compliments of Ken Selody, owner of Atlock Farm.

The "Lilac Party"

Sunday,
May 17, 2009

4:30 pm

**Wine Tasting by
Master of Wine,
Chris Cree**

**a cappella music by
"The Ten"**

Thank you

Peapack Gladstone Bank

*

56 degree wine

Morris County Park Commission
Tree Tech, Inc.

*

Silent Auction Partners

Atlock Farm
Chris & Kathy Cree
Morris County Park Commission
Peony's Envoy
Pleasant Run Nursery
Raritan Liquors
Ray Rogers
Tree-Tech, Inc.
Willowwood Fdn. Library

And to our *Lilac Party* Supporters,
a very Special Thanks

Black River Journal
Music Den
Prestige Party Rental Inc.
Ross & Owren
The Ten
Chris Knox, MCPC

~

John Morse, MCPC
Pam Wilson, MCPC
Willowwood Horticulture Staff
Jay Jordan & Staff, MCPC
Willowwood Horticulture
Volunteers
Kate Gutierrez, MCPC

Magnolias...

Southern Magnolia, *M. grandiflora*. John Morse noted that the Arboretum is experimenting with several of these, including Bracken's 'Brown Beauty', 'Edith Bogue', and 'Tulsa.'



John said that one of the most interesting magnolias in the collection is *M. x loebneri* 'Willowwood'. This cultivar was selected and named by Dr. Blackburn around 1940 from a seedling he found in the arboretum. It flowers in early spring, has fragrant white flowers, and becomes a pyramidal tree about forty feet tall. The original, now dead, was located near the Cypress Pool. Fortunately, the staff propagated several new plants from the original, three of which are now established at Willowwood.

The Willowwood Foundation Arboretum Committee has selected *Magnolia* to be a key collection, with development of species and cultivars suitable for north-central New Jersey. As the collection develops, the staff hopes to add more of the spring-blooming pink and white *M. stellata* and *M. x soulangiana* cultivars, as well some of the new yellow-flowered *M. acuminata* hybrids.

Popular ornamental plants in New Jersey due to their showy, fragrant blossoms, easy culture, and resistance to deer-browse, Magnolias are considered by botanists to be among the more primitive flowering plants due to their large flowers, abundant anthers, copious pollen, and high number of vessels in the wood xylem.

The Willowwood Foundation recently joined the Magnolia Society and purchased seed from the Society to grow and add interesting new plants to the current collection.

John Morse, Manager of Horticulture, MCPC



Here's the view from the proposed observation deck at the Willowwood Arboretum to honor Dr. Edmund 'Ted' Stiles. Ted was an ardent preservationist responsible for thousands of acres of meadows and precious green spaces remaining open throughout New Jersey. He was a Professor of Botany at Rutgers University, a Willowwood Foundation Trustee and avid hiker who roamed the trails throughout Willowwood and Bamboo Brook, and often marveled at this incredibly beautiful, ever changing vista. This spot, located between two walking trails at the eastern edge of the Hacklebarney meadow just beyond the Lilac Collection and north west of the Tubbs' House, faces down a gentle slope to the west towards Bamboo Brook. The Willowwood Foundation want to honor Ted's work at the Arboretum and thought that this would be a perfect site for his friends and fellow hikers to rest in the warmth of the sun and enjoy one of the places Ted loved so much. With donor support, construction could begin early winter, 2009.



Wanted..... Memories, video tapes, memorabilia about Willowwood and its history. The Willowwood Foundation Library Committee is planning an oral history project and is looking for interesting anecdotes and historical information on Hal (Henry) Tubbs, his adopted son, Dr. Ben Blackburn and others.

Frankly, we need your help as your recollections of Henry Tubbs, Dr. Blackburn, Russ Meyers, John Baldwin or any other memorable individual associated with Willowwood comprise a rich historical resource and will give this project a unique perspective by providing a "living history" of these remarkable people.

If you would like to be interviewed or participate in this project, have any suggestions on contacts, photos or information you would like to share, or would like to volunteer to help, please contact the Committee at: wwfoundation@earthlink.net or call 908-234-1815.

Permanent Plant Labels for your Garden:

Did you ever wonder about the embossed metal tags that identify the trees, shrubs and plants at Willowwood? Would you like them to identify plants in your garden?

The copper colored tag accommodates 6 lines and generally lists botanical and common name, planting date, etc. OR we can customize the tags with whatever personal or planting information you would like to incorporate.

Purchase customized tags by contacting the Willowwood Foundation at 908-234-1815 or email your order to: wwfoundation@earthlink.net.

Label size: 1 3/4 x 3 1/2 inches.

Cost: \$20.00 for a minimum order of 10 labels

Thank you To the friends of Willowwood who made generous donations this winter to help fund the Tubbs' & Blackburn horticultural legacy:

Mrs. Janet Allocca- Library Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Lonergan

~
Mrs. Madeline S. Pitney
Mrs. Ellen H. Vreeland

~
Mr. and Mrs. John A. Slattery
Mr. and Mrs. R. Donald Thomson

~
Ms. Rosemary Lohrmann
Mrs. Carol Mann

Thank you,
Mrs. Ruth Hill Thomson, noted local historian and frequent contributor to the *Black River Journal* read the Fall issue of the *Willowwood Journal* and has very



Original Urn

generously donated a new urn for the *Rosarie Garden* to replace the original one that had stood in the garden for many years and has over time become too fragile to use.

John Morse, MCPC Manager of Horticulture and *Rosarie* Gardener Judy Schaible were delighted with Mrs. Thomson's wonderful gift and plan to turn the new rustic looking urn into a very special water feature in the garden.

Delivery is scheduled for mid May and should be on display for Mother's Day visitors and *Lilac Party* goers. The *Rosarie Garden* debuted last summer as a rich and vibrantly hued Mediterranean inspired garden reaching its peak mid summer through first frost.

In bloom and coming soon:

Cherries, Magnolias —April
Crabapple trees, lilacs—end April, May
Pan's Garden—Tulips Now

Coming this summer:

~
The Cottage Garden— Ever changing, traditional florals with perennials, annuals, flowering bulbs and heirloom veggies.

~
The Rosarie—Spectacular Mediterranean colorations, herbs, spiky foliage plants and other plantings that thrive in a sunny, protected exposure plus many new plants to see in this restored garden.

The Willowwood Foundation
P.O. Box 218 * Gladstone, NJ 07934
908-234-1815 * wwfoundation@earthlink.net
WWW.willowwoodfoundation.org

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Save the Dates...

Mother's Day at Willowwood.....Sunday, May 10, 2009

oooooooooo

Sunday, May 17, 2009

Lilac Party ~ 4:30 PM

*Wine tasting with Chris Cree, 56° Wine, plus "The Ten"
Unusual Plants, Silent Auction*

HORTICULTURE INTERNS AT THE ARBORETUM

Each year the Willowwood Foundation helps an individual obtain practical hands on gardening experience by funding an internship at the arboretum.

Internships begin in early spring and continue through late fall and may run for three to eight months. Interns may work full- or part-time and are admitted on an as needed basis. Applicants must possess a keen interest in horticulture and enjoy working outdoors.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about becoming an intern in 2009, please contact Kate Gutierrez at 973-326-7266 or kgutierrez@morrisparks.net.

YES! I want to help the Willowwood Foundation continue the work of Dr. Ben Blackburn and Russ Meyers.

Please add me to your mailing list _____. Email _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ payable to The Willowwood Foundation.

All donations are tax deductible under section 501© (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address _____

Mail to: *The Willowwood Foundation, PO Box 218, Gladstone, NJ 07934* or call 908-234-1815 for more information