



Perennial Notes

November 2011

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society—an unincorporated nonprofit association

WHPS COMING EVENTS!

All regular meetings are 6:30 social time, 7:00 p.m. program at Olbrich Gardens Commons, 3330 Atwood Avenue, Madison, unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday November 16, 2011, I'm Not Really a Garden Expert, I Just Play One on the Radio Except for the fact that he has a program on WCPT Radio and, before that, at WGN, Mike Nowak is probably a lot like you and your gardening friends; he stumbled onto gardening somewhere in mid-life and has never looked back (except to see what he tripped over). Since then, he's interviewed dozens of horticultural experts—some famous, some not, some controversial, some cranky, some strange—who have taught him valuable lessons about gardening, environmental responsibility and life. **WARNING FOR PEOPLE WHO LACK A SENSE OF HUMOR:** This presentation may not be entirely serious! (Heck, even the pictures are funny.) Mike is an Illinois Master Gardener and Openlands TreeKeeper. In 2002, he co-founded the Midwest Ecological Landscaping Association and served as MELA's president for four years. www.mikenowak.net.

Wednesday, December 7, 2011, Annual Meeting, Seed Exchange and Member Potpourri. See page two.

Sunday, January 15, 2012, Member Potluck (Olbrich Commons) Picture show of the 2011 Ohio Trip Presentation by John Cannon & John Fritsch and Winter Tour of Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Setup after 9:00 a.m.; serving at 10:00 a.m.

February 10-12, 2012, WHPS Booth at Garden Expo. Plenty of opportunities to volunteer (and receive free admission!). Contact Eleanor Rodini, 608-257-2984, erodini@library.wisc.edu. WHPS will once again host a program on Saturday, February 11. This year, **WHPS President Frank Greer** will present *Favorite Perennials for Shade*.

Wednesday, February 15, 2012, John Bartram Comes to Madison, with Kirk Brown of Philadelphia. *This meeting will be held in the Microbial Sciences Building at 1550 Linden Drive.*

Wednesday, March 21, 2012, WHPS Meeting at Olbrich Commons, What's New in Shrubs, Brent Gustason, Midwest Groundcovers of Illinois.

Thursday, April 18, 2012, Olbrich Gardens. Program TBA.

Friday, May 18, 2012, Volunteers set up for 5/19 Plant Sale.

Saturday, May 19, 2012, WHPS Plant Sale! Held at West Madison Agricultural Research Station in conjunction with their *Family Horticulture Day*.

Saturday, June 2, 2012, WHPS Song Sparrow Buying Spree. Look for map and info in April Newsletter.

June 8-17, 2012 WHPS Trip to England. See itinerary and reservation instructions starting on page five.

Wednesday, August 15, 2012 5:30 p.m. setup; serving at 6:00 p.m., Olbrich Commons. Member Potluck and Summer Walk Through Olbrich Gardens.

Wednesday, September 19, 2012 Program TBA.

Wednesday, October 17, 2012 Lee Somerville of Sturgeon Bay, WI will discuss her book, Vintage Wisconsin Gardens. (Joint meeting with Madison Area Master Gardeners)

Wednesday, November 14, 2012 Program TBA.

Wednesday, December 12, 2012 Annual Meeting, Member Potpourri, Seed Exchange.

2012 Trips, in addition to the England Tour

April 27-29—St. Louis—three-day trip—Mobot, Shaw Arboretum (last went there in 2005)

Other potential trips:

Mid-summer—Sheboygan OR Milwaukee—one-day trip

August—Chicago—probable two-day trip—Milleneum Park, Graceland Cemetery, many private gardens and nurseries

Thank You Judy Crandall!

It's time to take a moment to say a big thank you to Judy Crandall, who is leaving the WHPS board after serving since October of 2008.

You will recognize Judy from her helpful presence each year at the Plant Sale and her participation and photos from our trips and tours. (And she is a constant presence in her red coat on the home page of our Website.)

We are happy that Judy will remain an active member of the WHPS, but her direct input on our board will be missed. Oh Judy, about working on the Plant Sale in 2012...

The WHPS Board Needs You!

To keep the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society a strong and viable organization with much to offer its members, we need the participation of individuals who are willing to actively play a role in our events and our future. We are looking for members who would be willing to serve on the board and are interested in learning about how WHPS works. We thank individuals like Linda Marx (dig organizer) and Eleanor Rodini (Expo booth organizer) who have joined the board in the past year and have taken an active role. **If you would like to be a director of the WHPS board, please contact one of our officers before November 30: Frank Greer, president, Jane Gahlman, VP or Diane Scharkey, treasurer.** (Their contact info is on the back page of this newsletter.) Your interest will guarantee that we remain a strong organization.

Member Potpourri—Members Express Their Garden Views

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, December 7. If you haven't had a chance to attend the WHPS Annual Meeting, Seed Exchange and Member Potpourri, you've been missing a great opportunity to network with member gardeners, pick up some annual and perennial seeds and some bulbs and tubers to store over the winter, and view photos and videos of member gardens and memorable gardens visited.

Member Potpourri

And we'd love to see photos of your garden December 7! If you've been taking pictures of your garden through the seasons, or if you have a special project you've just documented and completed and would like to show us, **please contact Stephanie O'Neal before November 20 so she can put you on the list to present your photos.** You can bring your photos saved on a flash drive or CD, which we will load onto the WHPS laptop before the meeting. You will have 10 minutes maximum to present, and you are welcome to present as many or as few photos as you wish during that timeframe. In the past, we have even had some members present a DVD or PowerPoint presentation. **You don't have to be a professional photographer or presenter to be a part of the Member Potpourri.** You just have to be proud of your gardening accomplishments, have photos of plants you are passionate about, have visited a really interesting garden or have a garden project you think we'd like to learn about.

Seed Exchange

As for the Seed Exchange, you are invited to bring your ripe seeds, extra dahlia tubers, gladiola bulbs, etc. to offer to other members in the half-hour before the meeting (6:30-7:00 p.m.) and after the meeting. If you are not familiar with this event, there is an excellent *Seed Exchange FAQ* on our Web site in the Newsletters & Articles section. If you have questions before the event, contact Jane Gahlman, our VP and Seed Exchange Coordinator, at 608-837-2317, jmgahlman@hotmail.com.

Hope to see you at the Annual Meeting Wednesday, December 7 at Olbrich Commons!

Great News! A magazine just for gardening lovers in Wisconsin

State-by-State Gardening, publisher of 15 different state gardening magazines, is excited to announce a new magazine for the Midwest Region: **Wisconsin Gardening**, the magazine written by Wisconsin gardening experts as well as other Midwest gardening authorities for Wisconsin gardeners.



To get an idea of what *Wisconsin Gardening* will look like, take a look at a FREE sample issue of one of their other state gardening magazines, *Kentucky Gardener* at http://www.kentuckygardener.com/read_online/may2010/. You'll love it! Here's what you will receive with your subscription: six great colorful, informative issues per year; a free state-by-state gardening discount card good for 10% off at participating local garden centers and nurseries throughout Wisconsin; expert advice; great ideas you can use in your own unique landscape; localized gardening advice for ornamental, herb, vegetable and turfgrass lovers; step-by-step "how to" stories for the hands-on gardener; beautiful color photography; outstanding solutions for tough gardening questions; information on great bargains, new plants and garden accessories available at local nurseries and garden centers; free Midwest gardening eNewsletter; Ask Our Experts—Nursery owners around the state answer questions and give their advice.

The magazine will be available through nurseries and garden centers such as The Flower Factory, public gardens such as Rotary Botanical Garden, and Walgreens, CVS, Target, Barnes & Noble and other big chain stores. Wisconsin contributors will include Ed Lyon (answering Ask the Expert), Erin LeFaive—UWEX in Eau Claire, Lisa Johnson—UWEX Madison and Sharon Morrissey—UWEX Milwaukee doing regional reports, Kate Jerome with Veggies, Roy Diblik of Northwind Perennials for Hot Plants, Mark Konlock of Green Bay Botanical Garden for Hot Plants and Melinda Myers for the back-page essay "Only in Wisconsin." Learn more and subscribe at 1-888-265-3600; <http://statebystategardening.com/wi>.

Time to make your bed

If you are looking ahead to minimizing your lawn and expanding your planting beds in 2012, November is a perfect month to lay out the bed in preparation for spring or fall planting. You can "draw" your bed on the ground with landscape paint, sand, flour or a hose (or just eyeball it as I have done). You can lay black and white newspaper directly on the grass (though I recommend spreading some compost before putting the newspaper down). Wet the newspaper, then lay either leaves or mulch in a 4-6 inch layer on top, watering that layer as well. It's really best to wait until the following fall to assure that the grass has fully composted, but I have planted bare-root shrubs in beds that were created just five months before. Take up the sod or create a mulched bed? No contest! Mulch beds are the easiest and most time-friendly way to expand your garden. Now where did I put those garden catalogs? —Stephanie O'Neal

Door County Delights

Trip Committee members Ed Lyon, John Cannon and Jane LaFlash organized another fantastic WHPS excursion—this time to the Door County area on June 4-5, 2011. It was two days packed full of public and private gardens and nurseries—truly a plant lover's dream come true!



Our first stop on Saturday morning was at Krensgarden, the private garden of Karen and Carl VandenHeuvel near Seymour. The huge quarry garden and pond in their backyard is spectacular; even more impressive is the fact that they built it all themselves by hauling in tons and tons of rock. Low walls of tufa rock

border the shade gardens filled with hostas and other perennials all mulched with a thick layer of pine needles. Karen's wintertime project is making exquisite stained glass lampshades—her talents are endless!

Our next stop at Mayflower Greenhouse in Green Bay was somewhat bittersweet, with the sudden and unexpected passing of owner Jan Vos just a few weeks prior to our arrival. His handiwork was still evident in the unique picture frames artistically planted with colorful varieties of sedums and succulents, the delightful troughs with adorable miniature conifers, and the moss-filled figures planted up in several shades of green. Out back, chickens with attitude roamed the fenced enclosure surrounding the quaint chicken coop decorated with a wreath made of terra cotta pots. Lush annuals, perennials and vegetable plants filled the greenhouses to overflowing. A 25% off sale on gorgeous ceramic pottery in every color of the rainbow and a 10% discount on all of our plant purchases enticed many of us to start filling the bays under the bus.

Following a tasty box lunch from Cranberry Creek Catering in a nearby park, we were off to explore Green Bay Botanical Garden. Huge tree peonies in full bloom greeted us at the entrance to the perennial garden. After Mark Konlock's wonderful presentation to the WHPS earlier in the year on the recent developments at Green Bay Botanical Garden, I was eager to see the folly structure and the new shade garden and streambed surrounding it—I was not disappointed! *Cornus kousa* 'Wolf's Eyes' caught my eye, as did the Spanish bluebells *Hyacinthoides hispanica* 'Excelsior' blossoming among the pathways. An added bonus during our visit was the annual Garden Faire with booths from greenhouses, nurseries and garden centers selling anything and everything garden related that your little plant-geek heart desired.

At The Plantscapers near Luxumberg, Jerry and his wife greeted us with cookies and lemonade to quench our thirst as the temps soared into the 90s. Jerry proceeded with a tour of the display beds and nursery, which included many hard-to-find trees and shrubs such as variegated-leaf tulip trees, pink-flowering buck-eyes, dawn redwoods, bald cypress and weeping pea shrubs. Oh!! Be still my heart!!! Hmm...how can I fit all of these fantastic trees on the bus? Sandcast leaves, hypertufa troughs, rustic wood trellises, teepee towers, benches and birdhouses all added to the charming character of the place. While poking around in the back of one greenhouse Lynn B. and I discovered Jerry's precious bonsai evergreen collection. Of course, these were all marked NFS (Not For Sale)! I had to be content with purchasing a huge

rosemary plant, a beautiful flowering kale and a blue *Clematis alpina* like the one that I had seen crawling halfway up the side of Jerry's barn.

Our Saturday night accommodations at the Bridgeport Resort Hotel on the water in Sturgeon Bay included two separate bedrooms in each suite and an indoor pool perfect for an after-dinner swim and time to reminisce about the day's events.

Sunday morning we arrived bright and early at the Jeanquart private garden in Sturgeon Bay. Owners Joan and Dale started with a blank slate thirty years ago and built a beautiful "French" garden featuring their unique ten-foot-tall pot people and poodle Francois. Overflowing flower beds, a sunken fire pit, delightful containers and a pond and stream accentuated the numerous



trees and shrubs planted as the backbones of the garden. New discoveries lay around every corner—I couldn't stop taking pictures.

I remember Karen Overbeck's opening comment about her Sturgeon Bay private garden—"It is what it is." Well, it was pretty darn spectacular! Karen is an artist, and she gave us a

guided tour of her magnum opus, starting with the mosaic "I AM A ROCK" at the front entrance. The hundred-year-old one-room schoolhouse and addition were surrounded with touches of the whimsical artist in the garden—metal work of a girl jumping rope and a boy throwing a baseball, monkey bars (reminiscent of my childhood), a bowling ball pyramid, rustic twig trellises, concrete patio stones, and many, many mosaic pieces, including one with the saying, "A garden is the collaboration between art and nature." But my favorite was the found objects tribute to Shrek on a shady rock wall intertwined with the mosaic "Once upon a time long, long ago in a faraway kingdom lived..."

The Garden Door, started by the Door County Master Gardeners in 1996, consists of four acres of trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals with a blue and orange color theme this year. Curly willow

twigs spray painted blue (my favorite color!) were a striking addition to several containers and will be making an appearance in my garden soon! Blossoming akebia chocolate vines and several varieties of clematis covered a wire tunnel walkway. Other features of interest included the human sundial, blue bottle tree, rustic wood trellis, hyper tufa troughs, mosaic benches and the cutest little faerie gardens, complete with mosaic houses and miniature rock garden plants.



Barb and Doug Henderson have been gardening on the land surrounding their cottage on the water (Bay side) since 1995. The first objects d'art to get our attention were the huge septic tank covers set upright in the shade garden along the driveway. Next we were oohing and ahing over several small dwarf conifers in pots lined up next to the garage from their buying trip to Song

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Door County Delights continued...

Sparrow Nursery the day before. (I tried to convince Barb that they were our door prizes, but she wasn't buying it.) While eating our box lunches in the garden near their fused glass studio we admired the colorful fused glass masks and mosaic benches and birdbaths. Twenty-two platform steps led from the studio down to the large deck surrounding the cottage decorated with more fused glass and mosaics. I was mesmerized by the one-of-a-kind three-tiered recirculating water feature made out of metal fire pit tins. On our way out I joined several people gathered round an upright burgundy leafed plant chattering about its identity. Could it be *Clematis recta* 'Purpurea', the purple leaf bush clematis? If so, I want one!

At Meissner's Nursery & Landscaping in Sturgeon Bay we were treated to cookies and lemonade served from the back of their

antique truck. I made a beeline for the showcase display beds around the house, noting the row of antique sprinkling cans (36) serving as the border for a flower bed and the rocks and soil piled on a stone slab and planted with rock garden plants and dwarf conifers—what a great idea! Meissner's primarily sells large-size trees, shrubs and perennials for people who want the instant gratification of instant landscaping, i.e. huge Bloodgood Japanese maples, magnolias, weeping beeches and pea shrubs, five-gallon pots of hostas (Jurassic Park-size was one comment I overheard), beautiful evergreens and *Actaea simplex* 'Black Negligee' for only \$16.50.

All of the gardens and nurseries we visited in the Door County/Green Bay area were absolutely delightful and I can't wait to go back!!

—Jane Gahlman

Photos by Cindy Hoffland

The Fragrant Epaulette Tree



Visitors to our garden during the summer WHPS Garden Tour often noticed and queried the identity of a tree with large bright green foliage and silvery-gray bark. The tree in question was the fragrant epaulette tree (*Pterostyrax hispida*). According to Hillier's Manual of Trees and Shrubs, the fragrant epaulette tree is native to China and Japan and was introduced in England in 1875.

In addition to the large bright green leaves, the tree has lacy white pendulous flowers, which come into bloom in June after many other flowering trees are done. The two- to three-inch flowers are borne in pendulous panicles about five to ten inches in length. The seedpods, which follow the pendulous shape of blooms, are tan, fuzzy, and cling to the

branches throughout the winter. The seedpods are quite showy and can be used in dried flower arrangements. The bark on new growth is a tannish color before maturing to a silver-gray. The tree grows quickly and begins to flower at an early age. In ten years, the tree will be about 15 foot tall and ultimately may reach 20 to 30 feet. The root system is very fibrous, which aids in transplanting.



Though occasionally some smaller branches may die back over the winter, the tree has never failed to flower. Usually these are branches of late summer or early autumn growth that had not hardened off before the onset of winter temperatures. I have not experienced any insect problems.

Years ago, when I began populating our city lot with woody plants, I saw an article about the fragrant Epaulette tree and was intrigued. At the time, I had no idea if the tree would survive in a USDA Zone 5a location. Since there was not a ready source of information about the tree, I decided to contact several northern arboreta for information and the possibility of obtaining seed. In this search, I discovered that two specimens were growing in the County of Monroe Park System in Rochester, New York since 1899. Eventually I obtained seed from John Fogg at Arboretum of the Barnes Foundation in Merion, Pennsylvania. The rest is history. Since then the fragrant epaulette tree has graced our garden for almost 30 years.

—Conrad Wrzesinski

Other Events of Note

Wednesday, December 7, WHPS Annual Meeting, Seed Exchange and Member Potpourri, 6:30 p.m. social and Seed Exchange; 7:00-8:30 p.m. program.

Saturday, December 3-31, Olbrich's Holiday Express: Flower and Model Train Show, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Olbrich Botanical Gardens.

February 10-12, 2012 WPT Garden Expo—Exhibition Hall, Alliant Energy Center, tickets range from \$7-\$16. <http://www.wigardenexpo.com/>

March 10-18, 2012 Chicago Flower & Garden Show—Navy Pier, Mon.-Sat. 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Tickets range from \$15-\$19, <http://www.chicagoflower.com/>

April 10-17, 2012, Rotary Botanical Gardens is sponsoring a *trip to the Netherlands*, including the Floriade World Horticulture Expo. Mark Dwyer will be the horticulturist leading this tour. www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org/events/horticulture-heaven

May 13-23, 2012, Olbrich Gardens (in conjunction with Burkhalter Travel) is sponsoring *Magnificent Gardens of Europe*, including the Floriade World Horticulture Expo in the Netherlands, the Chelsea Flower Show in London, and Giverny near Paris. Jeff Epping will be the horticulturist leading this tour. Attend a free presentation about the trip at Olbrich on Tuesday, December 13 at 6:30 p.m. <http://www.olbrich.org/events/regionalinternational.cfm>.

From Guildford to Rosemoor to Sussex: Nonstop tour of English gardens will delight and educate!

Itinerary—2012 Tour of English Gardens

Sunday June 10th

Meet mid-morning at London's Gatwick Airport, lobby of the Gatwick Hilton Hotel. Durham City Coach and Blue Badge Tourist Guide Marilyn Parker. Hope to have Andy as our driver again on this trip if he is available. Spend rest of day in nearby Surrey visiting two gardens before overnighing at the nearby Oatlands Park Hotel in Webybridge.

Loseley Park, Guildford—tour www.loseley-park.com The Walled Garden covers 2.5 acres and is divided into five "rooms," each with its own unique planting scheme and personality, based on a design by Gertrude Jekyll: Rose garden with over one thousand bushes; the Flower Garden with its maze of pathways and hidden corners; the White Garden that contrasts spectacular, showy, blooms with lush yet subtle silver and grey foliage; the extensive Herb Garden; the Organic Vegetable Garden with its unusual varieties; and, just outside the walls, the new wildflower meadow. Free for lunch here at the garden restaurant.

Vann Garden—tour, tea and biscuits www.vanngarden.co.uk This internationally renowned five-acre garden is formed by a series of "rooms" which surround and complement a home dating from the 16th century. You'll see the old Cottage Garden with delightfully informal planting in a formal setting, the robust 1907 Pergola of Bargate stone by W.D. Caröe, the Arts and Crafts architect and grandfather of the present owners, the Water Garden, laid out and planted by Gertrude Jekyll in 1911, and the newly designed and planted Centenary Garden. **Oatlands Park, Weybridge** (a repeat for those on the 2010 tour) www.oatlandsparkhotel.com

Monday June 11th

On to Oxfordshire where we will spend three days touring wonderful gardens.

The Old Rectory, Wantage—tea and cake. This outstanding 4-acre garden is a series of immaculately tended garden rooms, including herbaceous borders, arboretum, boules, rose, pool and vegetable gardens, where there is an explosion of rare and interesting plants beautifully combined for color and texture. With stunning views across the countryside, it is the perfect setting for the 1749 rectory (not open), once home of John Betjeman (an English poet), in memory of whom John Piper created a window in the local church. The garden is owned by Michael and Caroline Todhunter. Caroline is a talented garden maker and a marvelous plants woman.

Waterperry Gardens, Wheatley—www.waterperrygardens.co.uk. At Waterperry Gardens you are surrounded by beautiful trees, shrubs and flowers, classical borders, modern plantings, secret corners and long vistas, spread over 8 acres of formal garden. Home to the renowned horticultural college between 1932 and 1971, the emphasis was on food production rather than spectacular ornamental gardens. Over the past twenty years the gardens have developed and grown, and many new projects have been undertaken and completed. You'll find a Formal Garden, the Mary Rose Garden, a Waterlily Canal and the splendid Long Color Border, and the recently planted small arboretum in a meadow beyond the canal. Free for lunch in the garden restaurant. Perhaps you will partake of famous Waterperry apple juice from the gardens very large orchard.

Rousham House, Bicester—tour www.rousham.org Rousham and its landscape garden (27 acres) should be a place of pilgrimage for students of the work of William Kent (1685-1748).

Rousham represents the first phase of English landscape design and remains almost as Kent left it, one of the few gardens of this date to have escaped alteration, with many features which delighted eighteenth century visitors still in situ, such as the ponds and cascades in Venus's Vale, the Cold Bath, and the seven arched Praeneste, Townsend's Building, the Temple of the Mill and, on the skyline, a sham ruin known as the "Eye-catcher." The walled garden, which predates Kent's design, has herbaceous borders, a small parterre, a pigeon house and espalier apple trees. A fine herd of rare longhorn cattle are to be seen in the park. Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel in Oxford where we will spend the next three nights, dinner included. The hotel is a one half mile from the center of Oxford. www.four-pillars.co.uk.

Tuesday June 12th

The first garden of the day is **St. Catherine's College, Oxford**, tour with Barrie Juniper, Fellow Emeritus of the College and Reader Emeritus in Plant Sciences of the University www.stcatz.ox.ac.uk. Arne Jacobsen, the architect of St Catherine's, considered the garden an integral part of his design. As such it is now a Registered Garden to accompany the Grade 1 Listing of the buildings. Unlike historic buildings however, a garden cannot be conserved in every aspect: it must undergo constant change under the influence of the weather, the health and longevity of individual plants, new botanic introductions and the sensibility of those who care for it. The College's policy has been to work with the language of Jacobsen's design, but to complement its classical austerities with a softer and more Romantic English style which has become more obvious as the trees and shrubs have matured. However, the garden retains the strong personal imprint of its designer, particularly in the careful physical linking of built forms with garden spaces. Professor Juniper hopes to join us for dinner this evening.

Oxford, Botanical Garden—with tour www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk. Founded in 1621, this is the oldest botanical garden in Britain. A yew tree survives from 1650. It is surrounded by a stone wall and entered by splendid archway by Nicholas Stone. Plants are grown in this Garden to support teaching programs, for research scientists and as part of plant conservation projects. Furthermore, this Garden is a national reference collection of 7,000 different types of plants, making it the most compact (4.5 acres) yet diverse collection of plants in the World—there is even more biological diversity here than there is in tropical rain forests and other biodiversity hotspots. The Garden consists of three sections; the glasshouses contain plants that need protection from the extremes of the British weather; the area outside the Walled Garden contains classic garden features such as a Water Garden and Rock Garden, as well as the innovative Black Border and Autumn Borders; in the Walled Garden, plants are grouped in a number of different ways such as by country of origin, botanic family or economic use. It contains the national collection of euphorbias. Sandi and Nori Pope (remember Hadspen House on a previous WHPS tour?) were recently commissioned to plant autumn borders. Free for lunch in the city of Oxford.

Blenheim—tour of garden www.blenheimpalace.com AND visit house...! Home to the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, Blenheim Palace is the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill and a World Heritage Site. The palace was a gift from Queen Anne and a grateful nation to John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough following his famous victory at the Battle of Blenheim in 1704. Visit the gilded State Rooms, which house one

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of the finest collections in Europe, and the fascinating visitor experience, *Blenheim Palace: The Untold Story*. The Churchill Exhibition includes the room where Sir Winston Churchill was born 1874. The Formal Gardens owe much to the 9th Duke of Marlborough who, in the 1920s, with the help of the French landscape architect Achille Duchêne, redesigned the gardens to provide the Palace with the majestic setting that visitors see today. This is one of greatest contrived landscapes in Britain. The park covers 2100 acres with 100 acres of formal gardens. There are water terraces in the Versailles style, and an elaborate Italian garden. Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel with dinner.

Wednesday June 13th

Pettifers, Banbury—tour, tea and biscuits www.pettifers.com. The narrow, sophisticated garden in front of the 17th Century house does not prepare visitors for the beautifully planted garden and stunning landscape behind. A rectangle of lawn is flanked by deep borders with grasses and perennials. You'll find a parterre with four yews and domes of *Phillyrea angustifolia*. A flight of steps descends to the "Gustav Klimt" border and a long green paddock with an avenue of *Malus transitoria*. Gina Price's travels in India have liberated her sense of color which is evident in the garden.

Broughton Grange—tour with a gardener, tea and a sandwich www.broughtongrange.com. Prior to purchase by the present owner in 1992, Broughton Grange was owned for 200 years by the Morrell family. The gardens are beautifully set in 350 acres of parkland, farmland and open meadow, with planting that owes its origins to the Victorian era. In the early 20th century and under the ownership of Lady Ottoline and Philip Morrell, figures such as Bertrand Russell and Lytton Strachey were entertained. The gardens' development accelerated in 2001, when leading landscape designer Tom Stuart-Smith was commissioned to transform a six-acre south-facing field into a walled garden. This impressive new garden features three individually themed, sloping terraces and has been designed in strong relation to the surrounding rural landscape. At the lowest level, three parterres trace in boxwood the veins of a beech, ash, and oak leaf. Since the late 1990s, other parts of the gardens have been beautifully developed and a significant arboretum has been planted. The tree collection at Broughton includes a wide range of interesting species and cultivars, covering an area of approximately 80 acres. Walking tour of Oxford in the afternoon including a visit to a College. Free time exploring the city as well. Oxford Spires Four Pillars with dinner.

Thursday June 14th

Will proceed to South Wales after a full English breakfast, for two more days of gardens.

The Pant, Abergavenny—introduction and coffee. Two adjoining gardens set in secluded, spectacular Black Mountains scenery with 25 acres of landscaped woods, orchard, knot garden, walled garden, Islamic garden and green theatre with string quartet. Large dry stone turtle, ruined village, curious whale-shaped lake, all with wonderful views. Very steep—some will have to sit this out and think beautiful thoughts. Pick up one minibus to shuttle folks up and down to garden. The gardens were featured in *Gardens Illustrated* in the past couple of years and is on my must-see list.

Coed-y-Paen Village Gardens—www.coedypaenopengardens.org. This was Victoria's recommendation and she never disappoints. Will visit approximately six domestic gardens, which make minibuses available for transport. These are all private gardens with wobbly stones and narrow paths. They range from the formal to quirky, humble to ambitious, newly established to mature, hilltop to forest clearing. Take responsibility for your own safety today. The village is in a beautiful undiscovered

part of Monmouthshire with wonderful views and terrific atmosphere. A very warm welcome awaits us from the gardeners. Another two minibuses (making a total of three) waiting at Usk. Group splits into three to tour gardens separately. Cream tea served at "lunchtime." Cardiff Hilton for the next two nights. www.hilton.co.uk/cardiff.

Friday June 15th

Three more gardens today. The first is the famous **Aberglasney garden** with a talk from the head gardener www.aberglasney.org. Records for this garden go back to the mid-15th Century, when mention was made of nine gardens, orchards and vineyards. The whole estate was in a ruinous condition when a restoration trust was created which has been restoring the ten-acre garden. The cloister garden is now elegantly planted around a simple geometric design. The upper walled garden, completed in 2001, was designed by Penelope Hobhouse. To one side, the house is a rare example of a yew tunnel.

St. Fagan's—hope to tour with a gardener—pending confirmation. This National History Museum and Castle are situated within 100 acres now containing reconstructed buildings from all over Wales, often with attached gardens. The garden has an Edwardian feel and is approached by crossing fish ponds and walking up the Italian-style terraces. It is divided into distinct formal enclosures hedged by yew and box, including a thyme garden planted with annuals. A rose garden has been filled with varieties from 1900. The Arts and Crafts Italian garden is a simple space with 19th Century roses climbing its high walls, and includes a formal pool. Free for lunch here in the garden restaurant.

Dyffryn Gardens, Cardiff—tour. www.dyffryngardens.org.uk. Perhaps Wales most grandiose Edwardian house, with a 55-acre garden in the Arts and Crafts style. It was designed in 1904 for a shipping magnate and has huge formal lawns, one for croquet, another bisected by a long lily pool and fountain. The herbaceous borders exist on heroic scale. Grass paths snake through an arboretum, and there is a series of themed gardens—Pompeian, Italian, rose, theatre, lavender, swimming pool, paved court, etc. The walled kitchen garden is also being restored. Cardiff Hilton—free for dinner this evening on your own in the town.

Saturday June 16th

An early start today. We must journey across Somerset to Devon and the city of Exeter.

Lady Farm, Bristol—coffee, cake and talk www.ladyfarm.co.uk. The vision and commitment of Judy Pearce have, since 1992, turned the 12 acres into an outstanding amalgam of contemporary styles. The formal plantings around the farmhouse include a modern interpretation of a cottage garden and a "bobble garden" of standard topiary. The style becomes more natural as the garden extends down the valley. There is an impressive rockery sited to command the view. Innovative planting schemes are the hallmark of the garden—none more so than the steppe and prairie areas.

Milton Lodge, Wells—tour, cake, sandwich, tea www.miltonlodgegardens.co.uk. The fine terraced gardens, planted in Arts and Crafts style by the present owner's father in the 60s is cultivated down the side of a hill overlooking the Vale of Avalon, with marvelous views of the Wells Cathedral, which we'll tour later in the day. The spacious levels are generously and imaginatively planted. Many fine trees can be seen in the five-acre garden and in the separate seven-acre arboretum, with its good range of native and exotic trees.

Visit Wells Cathedral—highlight tour. (Well, I have always wanted to visit this cathedral and I am organizing the tour!) The Cathedral of the Diocese of Bath and Wells is situated next to

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England Itinerary 2012 - Continued

natural wells where springs of water rise up from beneath the Mendip Hills. This site has been a holy place for nearly 2000 years, and is thought by many to be the most beautiful of the English cathedrals. The foundations of the building you see today were laid in 1185. The Cathedral stands adjacent to the medieval Bishop's Palace and Vicars' Close, the oldest continuously inhabited street in Europe.

East Lambrook—talk www.eastlambrook.com. One of the best-loved privately owned gardens in England created by the late Margery Fish, celebrated plantswoman and gardening writer of the 1950s. *We Made a Garden* is my favorite of her books. Her natural gift for combining old-fashioned and contemporary plants in a relaxed and informal manner has created a garden of immense beauty and charm. The Grade 1 listed garden is renowned as the premier example of the English cottage garden style and is noted for its specialist collections of hellebores and hardy geraniums. It's new owners are continuing the gardening spirit of Margery Fish. Mercure Southgate, Exeter, where we will stay for two nights. For those of you who remember this trip from several tours back, it backs up to the Exeter Cathedral and nearly at the entrance to the cathedral close. www.mercure.com/gb/hotel-6224-mercure-exeter-southgate-hotel.

Sunday June 17th

Rosemoor—tour and free for lunch www.rhs.org.uk. This was the Royal Horticulture Society's first regional garden, second in importance only to Wisley, with which it has a stylistic affinity. Lady Anne Berry created the garden, and the original eight acres contain over 3500 plants from all over the world. The 65 acres include a formal garden with 2000 roses in 200 varieties, colour-themed gardens, herb garden, potager, cottage, foliage and winter gardens, an alpine terrace, three model gardens, extensive herbaceous borders and a garden designed by Tom Stuart-Smith, displaying a range of plants grown mainly for their leaves. There is a large garden shop with large display of books for sale. You will have plenty of time here to take lunch in the garden restaurant.

Castle Hill—cream tea and tour gardens with Lady Arran www.castlehilldevon.co.uk. This is an 18th century landscape garden and park on 40 acres created in 1730. To the east side of the Palladian house is the Millennium Garden, designed by Xa Tollemache, the Chelsea Gold Medallist. The large herbaceous borders are edged with box and lavender and illuminated "topiary" water sculpture was designed and built by Giles Rayner in 2002. From there the path takes you to the formal terraced lawns in front of the house where the eye is drawn across a small country road by a tree-lined avenue towards the Triumphal Arch built as an eye catcher. The woodland gardens are where rhododendrons, azaleas, hydranges, and eucryphias abound, together with other beautiful shrubs. Rare trees grow by the river among a network of woodland paths in the Easter Close. Many of the paths, some steep, are punctuated with follies and temples, built by each generation of the Fortescue family. The unique feature of this landscape is its beautiful valley with steep rounded hills swooping down to a winding river. A final climb takes you to a castle folly perched splendidly on the high hill with magnificent views of Exmoor, Dartmoor, and Lundy Island. Mercure SouthgateHotel, Exeter, with dinner.

Monday June 18th

Traveling back towards London we will visit three gardens in Sussex with a stop for lunch in the historic city of Chichester—founded in 43 A.D. with the Roman invasion of England and the site of a 900-year-old cathedral.

Round Hill Cottage—tour and coffee. 1½-acre country garden set in tranquil fold of the South Downs, designed in 1980 by Judith Adams whose inspiration came from French impression-

ists and continued by her daughter Louise, whose love of secret gardens, wild flower meadows, ponds, crumbly gothic ruins and shepherd huts all show to delightful effect in a garden full of surprises.

Cass Sculpture Foundation—tour www.sculpture.org.uk. 26 acres of woodland have been shaped to give a fine setting for 21st century British sculpture. The quality of the work is outstanding, and the trees act as screens, giving each piece its own stage and sometimes opening to views of the Sussex countryside. Over 72 large ever-changing works are on show at any one time. Beautiful gates by Wendy Ramshaw herald the entrance to the park, while at the end of one walk, the spire of Chichester cathedral is borrowed sculpture of the most majestic kind. Free for lunch in Chichester.

Rymans—unable to confirm visit at this time. Walled and other gardens surrounding lovely 15th century stone house (not open); bulbs, flowering shrubs, roses, ponds, potager. Many unusual and rare trees and shrubs. The heady scent of hybrid musk roses fills the walled garden in June. Millennium Copthorne Gatwick, for overnight and dinner. Driver leaves us here. www.millenniumhotels.com.

Tuesday June 19th

Departures on own. Small charge for shuttle to LGW by the hotel at your convenience.

Tour Details

Tour includes full breakfasts throughout and all dinners, except for one night in Cardiff.

Includes bus transportation and entrances to all gardens and lunches and teas in some gardens as noted on the itinerary in individual gardens. *Free for lunch* typically implies that you take lunch on your own in a garden restaurant or other nearby restaurant. Tour also includes portage of one bag per person.

Does not include any tips. Recommend a minimum of £3 a day to your guide and £2 to the driver. If you are happy with service in the dining rooms you could leave a little something.

Please aim to arrive in plenty of time to meet the group. If your flight is delayed you are responsible for catching up, so please bring currency to get a cab to Loseley Park or to Oatlands Park on the first day.

If any gardens become unavailable in the meantime we'll make substitutions. Similarly if there are any problems with the chosen hotels. There is a chance that we may gain entry to Prince Charles's Garden at High Grove but we will not know until next spring 2012—this is a long shot, but seems more likely than it did 7-8 years ago when we were invited to the garden two weeks before our appointed date in the month of April. This will clearly require some adjustments to the schedule if it looks like we can work the garden into our schedule, depending on a number of factors.

COST

\$2200 per person double occupancy; \$515 single supplement. Airfare is not included. It is most convenient if you fly into Gatwick rather than Heathrow, especially if you are arriving the morning of the start of the tour. Most travellers in the past arrive at least a day early. If you stay at the Millennium Copthorne Hotel near Gatwick the night before the tour departs, it is likely that there will be a bus pickup at the hotel prior to the one at Gatwick.

If you would like to reserve a spot on the tour, please send a check for \$200 per person, made out to the WHPS.

Checks should be mailed to Frank Greer, 925 Waban Hill, Madison, WI 53711.



••••• Member News, Tips, etc. •••••

Look to the future by knowing the past

Lee Somerville is a landscape historian and master gardener in northeastern Wisconsin with a masters in landscape architecture. You might have noted that she will be a speaker at the WHPS meeting October 17, 2012.

In her book, *Vintage Wisconsin Gardens*, she encourages us to take a look back and perhaps reclaim and recreate the “fragrance and individuality” of a vintage garden.

By the way, who knew *Sedum* ‘Autumn Joy’ was introduced to Americans from Germany in the 1920s?

A great read for lovers of history and gardens.

—Stephanie O’Neal

Would you like to be our Webmaster?

The WHPS Board is looking for a member volunteer willing and able to take on the upkeep of our Website and help with its creative direction. The time commitment is not extensive—minimum of 1 hour per month; maximum would be guided by your enthusiasm and knowledge. If you are interested, please contact Stephanie O’Neal at sone2@aol.com.

Now is the time...to take a walk in your garden

Ok, it’s a little past time, but if you think you will have plants to donate to next year’s Plant Sale, or think you will have enough plants to hold a dig with volunteers helping to pot your plants, take a walk in your garden now. It would be great if you could **make a list of the plants you plan to donate and email them to Stephanie O’Neal at sone2@aol.com**.

One of the things we strive for at the plant sale is a variety of plants available for a variety of gardeners. If you have an unusual plant that finally is making seedlings or is big enough to divide, let us know. The more plants we have that add value to the garden and are interesting to gardeners, the more we can spread the word about them and ensure a great sale!

WHPS T-shirts!

At \$10 each, WHPS T-shirts are a real bargain. Sizes currently available are medium and large. **To order a T-Shirt**, contact Jane Gahlman at jmgahlman@hotmail.com (or call her at 608-837-2317 and leave a message).

Members featured in media?

Do you know of a member’s garden that has been featured recently in the media? Send info to sone2@aol.com.

Visit our website:

www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.com

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



**NOVEMBER 2011
Newsletter**

**211 S. Fair Oaks Avenue
Madison, WI 53704-5822**

President—Frank Greer, 608-233-4686, frgreer@sbcglobal.net
Vice President—Jane Gahlman, 608-837-2317, jmgahlman@hotmail.com, Seed Exchange Coordinator
Treasurer—Diane Scharkey, dscharkey@aol.com
John Cannon, jtcannon@wisc.edu, Trip Committee
Jeannette Golden, 608-767-3736, jeannettyzqg@yahoo.com,
Plant Sale Volunteer Coordinator
Ed Hasselkus, erhassel@wisc.edu
Jane LaFlash, jlafash@wisc.edu, Membership Coordinator
and Trip and Tour Co-Coordinator
Edward Lyon, 608-658-3456, eslyon@wisc.edu, Program
Coordinator and Trip and Tour Co-Coordinator
Terri Maliszewski-Kane, 608-513-4189, terrimk1@hotmail.com,
Olbrich Liaison
Linda Marx, 608-249-7717, ljmarx@chorus.net, Plant Dig Coordinator
Stephanie O’Neal, 608-256-6108, sone2@aol.com,
Publications and Plant Sale Coordinator
Eleanor Rodini, 608-257-2984, erodini@library.wisc.edu,
WHPS Garden Expo Display Coordinator
Conrad Wrzesinski, 608-231-3279, conradw@charter.net

Do you have a question about your membership? Contact Jane LaFlash at whps05@yahoo.com, 608-243-1208.