

## Perennial Notes

The Newsletter of the Wisconsin Hardy Plants Society  
May 12, 1997

*The first essential difference between gardens is very simple and very evident. Some are gardened and some are not.*

*However small your garden, at least an acre should be devoted to trees.*

Reflections from a Garden, Susan Hill and Rory Stuart 1995

**May 24 SAT Hardy Plant Society Plant Sale** for members and their friends, 9AM-12 NOON Rain or Shine--just bring an umbrella. Garden of Heidi Carvin, 5907 Green Clover Lane (276-9713) in Madison's Seminole Forest neighborhood. From Co. Rd. PD, turn south on Wood's Edge (first turn East of Seminole Highway). First left turn on Wood's Edge is Green Clover Lane--third house on the right. Sale will feature plants from members' gardens (thus guaranteed to be hardy, at least for someone) at bargain prices. There will be many plants that are not available at any commercial growers.

Our Saturday digs were a big success!! Members dug and potted hundreds of Madison grown plants at the homes of Tom Cottingham, Joan Severra, Frank Greer, and Chris Bylsma. Many thanks to Tom Cottingham, Stephanie Bloomquist, Joan Severra, Ruth Cadoret, Louis Eberhart, Dottie Johnson, Nell Comings, Jane La Flash, Martha Coughlin, Jennifer Allen, Betty French, Joann Kreige, & Frank Greer. Please bring any additional plants from your garden that you would like to donate to the sale. Digging large clumps on the morning of the sale and bringing them in plastic bags or boxes is OK. Please do not show up without something to sell--we can sell anything!! Where else can you get a landscape size clump of blue Siberian iris for \$2.00?? Plants can also be dropped off at Heidi's anytime on Friday.

Save all those little cardboard boxes your mail order plants have arrived in this spring, and bring them to Saturday's sale to carry off all the treasures you and others are going to buy.

For the 240 members who weren't able to help with the digs:

**Additional help needed for the sale:**

Set up of Sale at Heidi Carvin's on May 23 (afternoon, early evening). Sort and label plants/

Supply coffee and sweets for morning of sale--May 24th

Help with sales and raking in the money. Morning, May 24th

Clean up of sale--you'll be there at the bitter end (12 noon) May 24th. We are anticipating donating left over plants to Taliesin East.

Again, if you can help with any of this, or even all of these, give Stephanie Bloomquist a call at 274-8326.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Some peculiar and irresistible attraction invariably lured me into the gardening sections of bookshops, and no sooner had I picked up the latest volume than my mind went blank. As I continued to leaf through page after page of sumptuous photography, reality ceased to exist and I was plunged into a deep horticultural trance. Not until I found myself out on the street again, blinking in the bright light of the afternoon and feeling the weight of those thoughtlessly purchased treasures cut into the flesh of my fingers, did I snap out of it. By then, however, it was too late....How on earth was I going to get another foot of space on my shelves?*

Foxgloves and Hedgehog Days, Secrets in a Country Garden, Daniel Blajan, 1997

June Events. (See last months letter for a complete listing)

June 7 Hosta Society Sale 0900-1200. At the home of Walter and Jean Rideout, Nakoma neighborhood of Madison, on the corner of Seminole Highway and Mohawk Drive. Also, Frank Greer's nearby Nakoma garden (925 Waban Hill) will be open for touring that day in conjunction with the sale. All WHPS members welcome and encouraged to attend.

June 18 , 1997, Wednesday, 7 PM. Tour of the Marsh and Sandy Fenner garden in Verona. Designed by Dennis Bittner (Allen Centennial Garden), it is one of the finest gardens in Dane County. Dennis Bittner will be on hand to lead the tour. This event is in the not to be missed category. Dennis Bittner has described the garden as "A private paradise designed for a professional couple who enjoy gardening. A barren construction site surrounded by a native hardwood forest was transformed into a series of garden environments including a prairie garden, a perennial garden, a shade garden, a vegetable garden and a water garden. This oasis includes a stream fed pond and a dramatic waterfall viewed from the upper deck. A romantic belvedere overlooks this magical kingdom and offers views of the surrounding country side."

A map to the garden is at the back of this newsletter. Note this event on your calendars. There will be no postcard reminder in June.:

### A Visit with Rosemary

On a beautiful mid April morning this spring we visited the legendary Hidcote, Lawrence Johnston's magnificent garden built on the grandest of scales featuring a succession of garden rooms and a surprise at every turn. Yet, despite the scale, it was all quite intimate, and it was of note that there were no fountains anywhere within the garden. We both agreed that this garden was everything we had expected it to be. After an afternoon of antiquing in the charming town of Stow-on-the-Wold, our car slowly approached the Cotswold village of Barnsley in the early evening. There were none of those roadside brown signs with white letters for the gardens of the National Trust, directing us to the next garden on our list. The village was typical of those of the region, characterized by yellow limestone houses and walls, the latter draped in masses of flowering aubretia in lavender, blue, and pink. Upon entering the village, a walled drive with an antiques sign caught my eye as it flashed by. Recalling that Rosemary's daughter-in-law ran an antique business in the house, we doubled back, and sure enough there was the much smaller sign for the garden. The somewhat overgrown drive leading up to a "modest" country house (by English standards), ended with the infamous "Please Park Tidily on the Grass" sign, which assured us we had found Barnsley House and the garden of Rosemary Verey. On foot, we approached the garden via a higgly-piggly nursery area, and were greeted by a middle aged man with some disability, watering the hundreds of containers. Just ahead, sitting at a grouping of several small tables, was a kindly elderly woman dressed in a faded embroidered jacket. Within seconds, from pictures of a much younger woman on the jackets of her books, we recognized her as the one and only Rosemary Verey. She greeted us pleasantly and collected the few pounds entrance fee. We purchased a few postcards, a recently updated guide book to the garden, and a couple of autographed copies of her book A Countrywoman's Notes. Amusingly, she had several paper covered shoe boxes for the money collected for the sale of postcards, books, and entrance fees. After a further exchange of pleasantries, she began to read to me her thoughts on "April" from A Countrywoman's Notes. She concluded the reading by asking, "Don't you love the month of April?" As a black cat jumped into my lap, she proceeded to ask how old I was and noted that she had a few years on me. She related how she maintained this place with one head gardener and some assistants from time to time, including her grandchildren. She noted that the gentleman we had met watering the nursery plants was her grandson. She then fretted about next week's trip to Delaware, where she was going to stay with William Frederick (author of The Exuberant Gardener, a sort of self-portrait of his garden). During our entire visit, she was puttering around the numerous cold frames and small hoop houses and made several trips down into the cellar to deposit or retrieve small flats of seeds, explaining that they grew all the annuals for the summer from seed. This woman of great character was the most memorable part of this unique garden visit for me.

The garden itself, after the overpowering scale of the likes of Hidcote and Chatsworth, was very small and very familiar to us. In fact, over the years we had seen many photographs of it at its very best in Rosemary's books. In this case, our preconceived notions of the garden somewhat detracted from our enjoyment of it. For instance, the famous laburnum walk in the early spring without the cascading masses of yellow blossoms from the pergola, was actually quite small and not nearly as memorable as the photographs in the books. The mid spring bulbs were at their peak with beautiful

color combinations. Tulip 'Apricot Beauty' was a standout and is one from the description in the bulb catalogues, I would never have purchased, though it will be in my spring garden next year. I envision it lusciously spotted through masses of Virginia blue bells. I hasten to add that no photographs, including my own, due it justice. There were a number a charming sculptures of women through out the garden and the all too familiar water features. My favorite part was the elegant kitchen garden (potager garden), actually located through a wall and across a dirt road from the main garden. It was surrounded by a working farm yard, which greatly added to the kitchen affect. Blooming tulips and other bulbs dotted the rows of lettuce and spinach and pea vines scrambling up arches of twigs. It was ornamented by a wonderful collection of garden conifers. I even pulled the lid off the large terracotta rhubarb forcing pot from which the pink stalks of rhubarb literally exploded . As we left the garden, a large gnarled rosemary bush in full bloom, cascading off the top of a wall where it had self seeded, brushed against by face delivering its wonderful herbal fragrance. Indeed, it had been a wonderful visit with Rosemary.

*Spring means the warming of the soil. The appearance of the first annual weeds is better than any thermometer to put you wise over this....On some spring days I imagine I can see the plants growing, especially when the earth smells good. This morning as I went outside in the sunshine after the rain, the familiar smell of basalm poplars wafted my way. The delicious resinous scent is strongest as the leaf buds are opening in April...The poets have got it right. Chaucer chose "Aprille with his schowers swoote" as the pleasantest month for his Canterbury pilgrims to "go on pilgrimage."*

A Countrywoman's Notes, Rosemary Verey 1989

DUES, DUES, DUES. It is that time again Please send them in today!!!!!! If there is not a "97" after your name on the mail label. this is your last newsletter!! So long, and happy gardening.

**THE WISCONSIN HARDY PLANT SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP 1997**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS ( ) change in address

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**EMail** \_\_\_\_\_

( ) INDIVIDUAL.....\$5.00

( ) FAMILY.....\$7.50

( ) I have included a few extra dollars for further support o the society's programs.

Please mail completed form and checks made out to The Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society (WHPS):

Richard Bloomquist  
5743 Wilshire Dr  
Madison, WI 53711 (274-8326)

I am interested in helping out with the following activities:

( ) Programs ( ) Plant Sale ( ) Mailings ( ) Community projects

( ) WHA-TV 1997 Gardening Expo ( ) Publications ( ) Tours ( ) Hospitality

Other local plant societies I belong to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

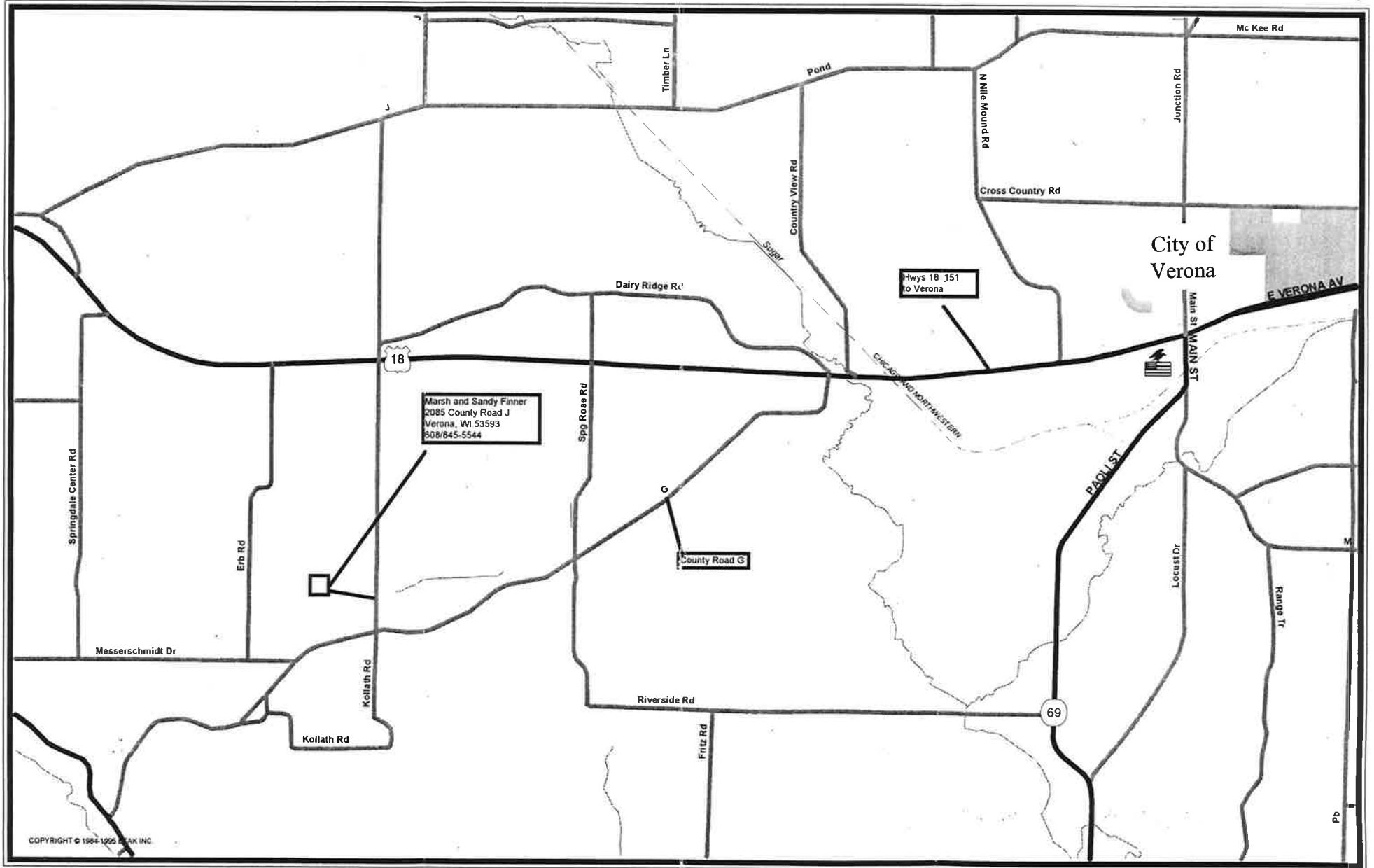
Expertise I have that may be useful to the society: computer, journalism, publishing, public relations, horticulture, landscape profession, etc. :

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society Tour

Wednesday, June 18th

# Current Map

7PM



Frank R. Greer  
925 Waban Hill  
Madison, WI 53711



PAMELA & CHARLES MATHER PD 97  
4337 MINERAL POINT RD  
MADISON, WI 53705-5042