



Perennial Notes

September 2005

COMING EVENTS!

Saturday, September 17— WHPS Plant Exchange 10:30-Noon

at Stephanie O'Neal's, 1850 Baird Street, Madison. From the Beltline, take Park Street toward Madison. Just past Buick Street, Beld Street curves off to the right. Take Beld, then turn right on Bram and left on Baird. It's the first little white house on the left. Bring plants that you are thinning or dividing, plants you bought and never found a place for, this year's seed-grown plants that are "extra," and annuals to take cuttings from. Bring donations between 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. for labeling and setup. At 10:30 a.m. the selection of plants will begin (ending at noon). You can also take a stroll through the garden.

Wednesday, September 21, 6:30 p.m. social hour, 7:00 p.m. program, Olbrich Gardens. **Speaker will be Ann Raver, garden columnist for *The New York Times*.**

Wednesday, October 19, 6:30 p.m. social hour, 7:00 p.m. program, Olbrich Gardens. Speaker to be announced.

Wednesday, November 16, 6:30 p.m. social hour, 7:00 p.m. program, Olbrich Gardens. Speaker to be announced. **Member Seed Exchange** before and after program.

Wednesday, December 7, 6:30 p.m. social hour, 7:00 p.m. program, Olbrich Gardens. Speaker to be announced.

WHPS Goes to England June 2006



Well, here it is at long last. As you can see by the itinerary that follows, this tour will proceed West from London and reach Lands Inn at the very tip of SW

England in Cornwall. It will include an optional tour by helicopter to the legendary garden at Tresco Abbey located on the largest of the Scilly Isles 28 miles off Land's End, for those who want this once in a lifetime experience. The gardens have been carefully selected to cover the best of both large and small private gardens in route. In most gardens we will have a tour by the head gardener.

Cost

The cost will be about \$2600 per person, not including airfare. This will include 7-9 dinners and a full English breakfast each morning. Lunch will be on your own each day. Transportation by coach and entrance fees to all gardens is included. The tour to Tresco Abbey is \$225 extra. Single supplement is \$375. Prices are based on a pound equal to \$1.80. Note it has fluctuated between \$1.75 and \$1.85 in the last year.

If you are interested, please send a deposit for \$100 to Frank Greer, 925 Waban Hill, Madison, WI, 53711. ASAP. Please list your roommate, or if you desire to share a room with someone. Also, let me know if you will require a single room. Note after the last minute dropouts in 2004, I can no longer guarantee a refund of your \$100 after January 1, 2006. The refund is used for a deposit at the hotels and is nearly impossible to get back.

Friday, June 9

Meet at Gatwick airport to board the coach with Max (our regular driver) and Franki McCabe, our London Blue Guide we have used on every trip. Mottisfont Abbey—the one-of-a-kind walled Rose Garden designed by Graham Stuart Thomas. Visited by us in 1998 and the inspiration for Olbrich's new rose garden—no cocoa mulch and hybrid teas here, but lush perennial plantings with roses in an old apple orchard. Bournemouth for overnight at the Norfolk Royale with dinner. Stayed here in 2000. After dinner enjoy a walk through the city's botanic garden to the seaside.

Saturday, June 10

Sticky Wicket, Forde Abbey and Cothay Manor. Two nights in Exeter with bed and breakfast only at the Southgate Hotel, Southernhay East, Exeter EX1 1QF. Tel: 0870 400 8333.

Sunday, June 11

Castle Drogo, Killerton and Knightshayes (gardener of Knightshayes will come in to do the tour).

Monday, June 12

The Garden House and The Eden Project (#1 tourist attraction in Cornwall). Next four nights at the Meudon Hotel, Mawnan Smith, TR11 5HT. Tel: 01326 250541. Dinner each night.

Tuesday, June 13

Lamorran, Trist House and Roseland all in Cornwall.

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Gardens on Tour Review

On Wednesday, June 15 the weather changed, the temperature dropped, and the sun came out just in time for us to enjoy the evening WHPS garden tour. Five beautiful gardens were open for touring in the Nakoma area.

Craig Bolles gardens on a large corner lot on Manitou Way features shady perennial borders, including an impressive, and growing, Rhododendron collection, several clematis vines, and Kalmias (mountain laurels) that were in full bloom, a sight not often seen around here.

Jeff Gepner's backyard garden on Seneca Place has been recently renovated to include multi-leveled hardscaping, and features a large stoneware water feature bubbling over onto a terrace with perennial plantings to add intimacy and drama to the space. A yellow flowering Clematis (tangutica?) mingled in the front of the house with a beautiful and vigorous Wisteria (macrostachys 'Aunt Dee?').

Containers of all sizes and shapes brimming with specimen flowering and foliage plants greets the visitor to Frank Greer's woodland garden on Waban Hill. The back garden features a striking colony of Liliium martagon and several mature *Hydrangea anomala petiolaris* (climbing Hydrangeas) surrounded by shady borders and a water feature under mature oaks.

A wisteria-covered pergola provides a cool shady spot to view a kitchen herb and vegetable plot and fine perennial borders in the garden of Ed Hasselkus on Miami Pass. The blue and yellow border was planted with Geraniums, a beautiful blue flowered Clematis (durandii?), and punctuated with the tall spires of Eremurus and a truly special rare yellow flowered herbaceous peony.

Just up the street from Ed, Chris Bylsma's front entry garden is a lovely tapestry of colors and textures. The back garden is a cool, shady retreat with lovely perennial combinations featuring many specimen Hostas including a tropical looking giant, *Hosta nigrescens* 'Elatior'.

On Tuesday, June 21 we enjoyed the short drive out to Waterloo to visit three more gardens. Howard Kulke has planted a mini arboretum of specimen trees and shrubs about his property, while Bonnie grows a wide variety of annuals and perennials for Onondaga Herbs and Everlastings. A prairie garden, large waterfall and pond, and a kitchen vegetable plot surround their house.

Lee and Chris Fiedorowicz and David and Jeannie Zastrow merged their two adjoining gardens to create a cool green oasis punctuated with plantings of colorful perennials. A waterfall, stream, and pond garden, and dozens of birdhouses nestled under large trees, no doubt provides a sanctuary for visiting wildlife.

On July 9, as part of a garden conservancy tour, we visited Pat and Chuck Bell's garden near St. Charles, IL. Many island beds are planted with sun loving perennials, including a large variety of Hemerocallis. Paths lead visitors through a woodland garden planted with specimen Hostas and companion plants under mature Oak trees. A more formal garden is richly planted with combinations of shade loving perennials, sculptures, and a welcome seating area offering relief from the 90° heat.

—John Cannon

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OUR GARDEN HOSTS!

Rotary Gardens 7th Annual Fall Plant Sale

September 10th - 18th, 9 am - 6 pm daily
Rotary Gardens Horticulture Center, Janesville

WHPS Members are invited to a Pre-sale on Friday, September 9th from 9 am - 6 pm (Everything 10% off!)

The sale will include 500 varieties of perennials, woody plants, bulbs, colorful asters, flowering kale, huge mums and many other items. All proceeds from this sale benefit the continued development and operation of Rotary Gardens. Call Mark Dwyer at (608) 754-1779 with any questions.

England Trip 2006

(Continued from previous page)



Wednesday, June 14

Trebah, Trenarth and Bonython. in Cornwall.

Thursday, June 15

Tresco Abbey – optional, by helicopter from Lands End to the Scilly Isles. Franki stays with the land-lubbers, who go to Trengwainton and St M's Mount and perhaps have some free time for shopping in St. Ives!

Friday, June 16

Lost Gardens of Heligan, Pine Lodge, then travel up to Hampshire. Overnight with dinner at the Basingstoke Country Hotel, Scures Hill, Nately Scures, Hook, RG27 9JS. Tel: 01256 764161.

Saturday, June 18

The Manor House, Upton Grey, West Green House Garden with a talk, and Painshill Park. All gardens with in the far west London suburbs. Overnight with dinner at the Cophthorne London Gatwick, Cophthorne Way, RH10 3PG. Tel: 01342 348800.

Sunday, June 19

After breakfast, departure for home. Though most people will be traveling home from Gatwick, we will try to arrange for a small vehicle to take folks to Heathrow.

Host a dig next year?

Now is the time to think about whether you would like to host a dig for next year's plant sale.

If you would like to contribute plants to the WHPS plant sale and know that you will need help in digging and potting up the plants, contact Ruth Cadoret at rcadoret@wisc.edu to let her know you are interested in hosting a dig in April or May 2006.

It's a great way to clean up your garden in the spring and contribute to WHPS at the same time!

My Love Affair with Ornamental Grasses



A year ago I had never given ornamental grasses a second thought. My opinion was why would anyone actually want to plant grass (you just have to cut it!), and I'm always working toward my goal to get rid of all of my lawn grass and put in more flowerbeds. I figured less time spent mowing was more time to tend to my flowers, and I would much rather work in my flowerbeds than mow lawn.

Then I picked up a couple small clumps of Zebra grass (*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Zebrinus') at the WHPS Plant Exchange at Stephanie O'Neal's garden in September 2004. I had seen this 6' tall arching grass in some of the tour gardens last summer and liked the striking horizontally banded leaves. I stuck the clumps in a new bed near the road open to the west and north where they would catch the breeze. I'd just had two medium size silver maple trees removed from that area so the new grasses were in full sun. Then one day on my way home from work I stopped at Schönheit

Gardens and bought a gallon pot of the 4-6' tall Porcupine grass (*M. sinensis* 'Strictus') with similarly banded leaves but with a more upright habit than the Zebra grass. I also picked up two of the Blue Switch Grass (*Panicum* 'Dallas Blues') with wide steely blue leaves and purplish seed heads to 6-8' and two of the Blue Oat Grass (*Helictotrichon sempervirens*) which forms a dense mound of blue gray foliage 24-30 inches tall. Both of these blue foliage grasses contrasted beautifully with the green and white striped *Miscanthus*. I was falling in love with ornamental grasses!

My love affair with grasses continued this spring when I started working as the Nursery Manager at Schönheit Gardens. I had to have some of the *Calamagrostis acutiflora* 'Avalanche', a Feather Reed Grass similar to Karl Foerster but with variegated foliage consisting of deep green leaves with a wide white stripe down the center. Its feathery gold 4' tall plumes appear in early summer and last for the whole season – even into the winter months. I added two of them to the same flowerbed near the road where they complement the greens and blues of the other grasses there. I also put in two of the annual 3-4' tall Purple Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum setaceum* 'Rubrum'). Their arching wine-purple foliage is topped with fuzzy burgundy plumes that sway gracefully in the breeze. I also couldn't live without two of the 5-6' Maiden Grass *M. sinensis* 'Gracillimus' with their beautiful fine-textured silvery green leaves and arching habit. Even though this grass and the shorter 4-5' *M. sinensis* 'Morning Light' rarely bloom in our climate, they both remain sturdy through the winter and add an interesting architectural element to the garden any time of year. I planted them near a *C. acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster', which grows to 5-6' tall and has erect wheat-like seed heads that last all season long. Then I just had to have some of the 8-10" rounded mounds of Blue Fescue (*Festuca glauca* 'Elijah Blue'). I love how their soft powdery blue foliage stands out in the garden and holds up all year.

To really add pizzazz to the bed by the road I planted up two huge pots with annual *Rudbeckia* 'Indian Summer', *Sedum repestre* 'Angelina', wave petunias, sweet potato vine ('Blackie' and 'Marguerite') and *Millet* 'Purple Majesty' which can grow up to 5' tall with dense dramatic plumes and dark burgundy foliage. In late summer or early fall I plan to switch out the annual flowers in the pots for some fall mums and kales to carry the interest through the fall season. Later on, after the mums are done, I'll start the holiday decorating by adding some evergreen boughs and red berries, and some curly willow or red-twigged dogwood to take the pots through the winter. For additional winter interest in the garden, I'll leave the perennial grasses up until spring before I cut them back. I can't wait to see them waving in the wind through the snowdrifts.

Next year I want to try some of the native grasses such as Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) and Prairie Dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*). Both of these sun-loving grasses are drought tolerant and grow to 2-4' tall. Or maybe I'll get the giant Ravenna Grass (*Erianthus ravennae*) with flower stalks that can reach 12' tall!! The love affair continues...

—Jane Gahlman

Jane Gahlman is the Nursery Manager at Schönheit Gardens, a new perennial nursery at 3577 Bailey Road, Sun Prairie (just minutes from Madison at the intersection of Hwy T and Bailey Road). 2005 Hours: Tues-Sat 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Sun 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., closed Mondays. Fall mums and kales arriving by September 1. Stop out soon to receive up to 30% off a wide selection of ornamental grasses, perennials, trees and shrubs. Phone: 608-441-9832.

WHPS loses a friend—Lila Erickson

Our thoughts and condolences go out to Al Erickson. He and Lila have been great participants in WHPS, volunteering for the Expo, the Plant Sale and whenever needed.

Lila was an avid gardener. Gardening was a family thing that seemed to get passed down from one generation to the next. I knew Lila's mother (she made the best oatmeal cookies) and she did a lot of vegetable gardening, but always had room for flowers somewhere, so Lila came by it naturally. Lila and Alton raised three boys, Christopher, Van and Jens. Lila was a member of our small garden club and a member of the Iris Society and the Hardy Plant Society. She was always willing to share her knowledge of gardening to anyone who asked. She loved birds and nature as a whole. If you had a perennial that didn't grow in your garden, but it grew in her garden she would tell you how she did it. She will truly be missed..... —Phyllis Sanner

God saw you were getting tired
And a cure was not to be.
So He put His arms around you
And whispered
"Come to me"
A golden heart
Stopped beating.
Hard working hands now rest.
God broke our hearts to prove to us
He only takes the best.

Deer Control Works!

I tried another method to keep deer out of my yard. Unlike the rest of the so called guaranteed products this one worked and was easy to use. I tried the Wireless Deer Fence I saw at the Chicago garden show. The product is not fencing but are a group of posts that you place any were you want keeping the posts about 5 to 10 feet apart. The posts work by giving a mild shock to the deer if the deer touches the post. There is a scented plastic which is reapplied monthly and operates by batteries. I had flowers bloom that I have not seen in over 5 years and even found several lilies that I thought were gone for ever now in bloom. The deer did not damage anything on the side of the yard by the posts! The scented plastic pieces are easy to reapply and work even if there is rain. I know the deer found the posts because I found three of the posts pulled out of the ground and the top pulled away from the battery part. I easily put the posts back together and back into the ground. I have deer damage in the other part of the yard and my neighbor mentioned that she has more deer in her yard than in other years. The posts are keeping the deer out of the area that I put the posts. I am considering buying more posts for the other side of the yard.

Information on Wireless Deer Fence
 Each package contains three posts and one year scent supply. The price is \$59.95 per box of 3 posts. You may contact wirelessdeerfence.com or 866-468-3337 for more information.

—Sherry Lloyd

FLAT FLATS NEEDED!

If you have any flats without dividers, please contact Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com; 256-6108. **We are in dire need of flat flats for next year's sale.** (They are convenient because they can hold a variety of different pots.) We can also use 3", 4" and 6" square pots and flats with dividers that can hold these sizes of pots.

Important Plant Sale Thank You

To Robert Quick, who helped create all of the plant signs used at the sale. This was a huge last-minute and time-consuming job. Because of his efforts, our members were able to have good information and a visual reference for each plant as they shopped. Thank you Robert!



**Do you have a garden tip or idea for our members?
 Contact Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com**

WHPS Web site: www.madison.com/communities/wisconsinhardyplantsociety/

*Wisconsin Hardy
 Plant Society*



**September 2005
 Newsletter
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Someone you know interested in joining WHPS?

Contact WHPS Treasurer Laurie Zimmerman at whps05@yahoo.com, (608) 838-4477