



ADIRONDACK
CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

Visit our blog: acnargs.blogspot.com

July/Aug. 2008

In this issue:

- August 16 Annual Picnic and Member-Only Plant Sale
- 2008 program plans
- Garden photography workshop September 20
- June Garden tour report
- From the Chair
- Program Thoughts for 2008
- The Adirondack Chapter (Finally) Goes to the Adirondacks!
- Rock garden dedication at White Pine Camp
- Trip to Chanticleer
- News from National:
- Thanks for a great plant sale!
- Coming Soon: A New Public Rock Garden in Corning
- Geoffrey Charlesworth's passing
- People

August 16 Annual Picnic and Member-Only Plant Sale

Have you potted up plants for this year's member-only plants sale and picnic?

Plans are set for this year's event, Saturday, August 16, to be hosted by Judy Fogel at her home and gardens at 12 Waterview Circle, off Route 34 along the east side of Cayuga Lake just a short distance out of Ithaca. (See directions below.)

The schedule:

- **10:00 a.m.** Arrive promptly, get your plant sale number and help with sale set-up and pricing.
- **11:00 a.m.** Plant sale begins outdoors rain or shine. Buy, buy, and buy some more.
- **12:00 noonish** Dish-to-pass picnic lunch (drinks will be provided). We'll eat outdoors weather permitting. Bring a lawn chair.
- **1:30-ish p.m.** Tour Judy's extensive gardens.

As in past years, we'll very democratically allow those who arrive first to get "first dibs" at purchases. So it pays to arrive early. For the treasured and special plants, we will have a silent auction table. Note this is our only members-only sale and we should have some real gems. Not yet a member? We welcome you to join for 2008 at this meeting for \$10 (\$15 for families). It's still a great value since we have half of our program year ahead of us.

Our Chapter has plenty of good cooks. Simply bring your appetite, along with your dish-to-pass, and your own table service in addition to plants you want to donate for the sale. To speed things up, please try to label your plant contributions in advance. We have accommodations for rain or shine so don't let the weather discourage you. Our sale will be outdoors but partially sheltered. And of course, if you need further incentive to come, this will be a great opportunity to see Judy's extensive gardens as previously featured during a recent Garden Conservancy Open Day.

Here's what the Garden Conservancy website (<http://gardenconservancy.org/opendays/index.pl>) says about her garden:

This is a nine-year-old garden overlooking and sloping toward Cayuga Lake. Conifers, ornamental trees, nut trees and shrubs (many started as saplings), and meadows border the two-acre property. Next to the house are a thyme and flagstone patio, roses and clematis on trellises, shrubs, and flowering trees in the front of the house and flowering plants in containers on the rear patio. An herb garden backs up to a rugosa rose garden which is situated adjacent to a cutting garden. A pergola draped with hops and clematis borders the enclosed potager for vegetables and flowers. The long, mixed-border cottage garden is filled with flowering shrubs, perennials, and annuals. A waterfall behind the mixed border leads to the pond and a burning pit/sitting area which is planted with small trees, grasses, and shrubs. A small wooded area is the site of a future shade garden. Completing the gardens are a small grape arbor and a rock garden.

Directions: From Ithaca, go north on Route 13. Take exit for Route 34/East Shore Drive and drive north on Route 34 for 4.4 miles, then turn left onto East Shore Circle. Stay on East Shore Circle for 0.2 mile then turn left onto Teeter Road. After 0.2 mile turn right onto Waterview Circle Road. Number 12 is on left. Please park on street.

2008 program plans

Here are the plans for the rest of 2008. See ACNARGS blog for more info: acnargs.blogspot.com

- **August 16:** Picnic and Member Plant Sale, Judy Fogel's in Lansing. More info and directions in this newsletter.
 - **September 20:** Durand Van Doran, Trumansburg, N.Y. metal artist, Wrought Iron in the Garden. Whetzel Room, 404 Plant Science Building, Cornell University. Brown bag lunch at noon. Program starts at 1 p.m.
 - **September 20:** Photography workshop with Julie Magura, 9 a.m. to noon.
 - **October 18:** Jody Payne, rock garden curator, New York Botanical Garden, topic TBD. Brown bag lunch at noon. Program starts at 1 p.m. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca, N.Y. (where Dey St., Willow Ave. and Rte. 13 meet). If you need directions, visit: counties.cce.cornell.edu/Tompkins or call the CCE office (during regular business hours): (607) 272-2292.
 - **November 15:** Annual meeting and dish-to-pass. Tony Reznicek, curator of the University of Michigan Herbarium will speak on a topic TBD. Location TBD.
-

Garden photography workshop September 20

The chapter will be sponsoring a Garden Photography Workshop led by local photographer Julie Magura (www.juliemagura.com). The workshop will be held 9 a.m. to noon September 20 (before our regular meeting). Cost is \$20 and the class size will be limited to 10. Look for more details in the September newsletter or on the ACNARGS blog: acnargs.blogspot.com. If you would like more information or to reserve a spot, email Susanne Lipari: sel3@cornell.edu.

June Garden tour report

About 12 to 15 chapter members and friends met at the garden of Louise Lutz and Joe Zader to begin the garden tour on June 21. On a very hot day, the lovely shade garden on Tully Lake was a welcome respite. The Hostas were magnificent, mature clumps at the peak of perfection without a sign of deer damage. Interesting stonework, paths, water features, a variety of groundcovers, and the view of the sunny lake all contributed to a fine tour.



In the sunnier portion, I was especially interested to see the lush ornamental grasses. I had seen these the previous summer when they were so dense as to tempt one to play hide-and-seek, and Louise had told me she was planning to reduce their width. It turns out she had divided them in early May, and rescued a stone path they had hidden, but if one hadn't known they had just been divided, one would never have guessed.

Next we went onto Donna Kraft's garden on the west side of Crooked Lake, a kettle lake. Donna has both sun and shade and many fascinating and unusual plants, such as ladyslippers. The Japanese iris and clematis, two of my favorites, particularly caught my eye, along with the large Hosta growing under the deck, the stonework, the waterfall, and the views from the hillside and the deck, and the courtyard plantings. Donna also has large flowerbeds near the road for passersby to enjoy.

Our last garden stop was a tour of Dr. Mango's garden in Solvay, created by the designer Diana Smith. Diana is also the owner of Topiary Gardens in Marcellus. There we got to explore this multi-level garden "off the beaten path" as Diana led us on a behind the scenes tour using the stepping stones she had placed for access. This stunning garden features dozens of mature Japanese maples, unusual conifers, lots of ponds and water features, hardy cactus, and incredible stonework. Dr. Mango has over 5 acres in his landscape, quite a jewel in an urban setting. I was particularly struck by the magnificent Japanese maples, mostly in full sun (and we were there during the hottest part of the day), and receiving no supplementary water. The soil must be good, and the microclimate milder than most of Tompkins County, because at Cooperative Extension, we see many samples from unhappy Japanese maples suffering from marginal scorch and/or twig dieback from drought, too hot an exposure, winter cold, or winter wind and sun.



Some folks may have gone on to Watson's Greenhouse, but we made a little side trip to the Rose Garden at Thornden Park, and then it was back to the air conditioned car with a sigh of relief.

A big thank-you to the organizers of this great garden tour!

Pat Curran

Photos courtesy Nigel Dyson-Hudson and Pat Curran

From the Chair

Steadily over the last 3 or 4 months my garden has been calling me. Not unlike a demanding 2-year-old, it is "demanding" that I plant, weed, edge, and mulch it, deadhead or shear, water, divide, or thin it, then time repeat the cycle again and again. It makes me hot, dirty, calloused, and plain worn out. But, you know, it feels like life couldn't get much better!

This year I've moved a lot of perennials – based on some loose notes from last season and to accommodate (translate: to find room) for new plants that I "had to have." Every year I seem to reinvent my garden and every year I say, "This is it! This is perfect!" But every year this re-arrangement seems to occur all over again.

So too, I recall at our member plant sale last year, I fell in love with new gems that other members had brought (realizing that I didn't already own ALL the species in the world) and couldn't resist acquiring more plants. I wasn't the only one wondering where these newly-adopted plants were going to go in the garden.

I say thank goodness for my plant obsession – and yours. It has made for quality donations at our plant sales and has assured us of eager buyers. I know my garden and my knowledge have both been greatly enhanced though this Chapter. In fact, some of my most treasured plants were ones I got from you, our membership – and that's a story for another time.

The moral of this story: Come to our annual member plant sale on August 16th. Bring a few choice or favorite plants if you can. Come discover new delectables to add to your garden. And ...shamelessly indulge your love affair with plants.

Carol Eichler, chair

Program Thoughts for 2008

OK members, it's time to hear from you. What program would you like to see presented in the coming months? What are your burning questions? What are your plant interests? Where do you feel your plant knowledge could be bolstered? If you are a new member or a new-to-rock gardening member what do you most want to learn about?

Alternatively, have you heard a garden presenter that we should try to book? Note that we pay our speakers and cover their travel costs too.

Here are just a few ideas the committee has had so far:

- A workshop on Photoshop basics – enhancing your photography skills
- Hands-on recipes and tips for alpine soils (favorite mixes, different mixes for different plant types, troughs versus gardens, local sources of materials, etc
- Dwarf and miniature conifers for the garden

Please take a moment to contact our new program committee as they begin planning year's programs. Donna Kraft will be fielding your responses at dkraft@twcny.rr.com or 315-696-8626.

Carol Eichler, chair

The Adirondack Chapter (Finally) Goes to the Adirondacks!

It took a little help from members Dick and Mary George to finally live up to our name as the Adirondack Chapter of rock gardeners.

On June 14th a small group of us spent a good part of the day in the Adirondacks near Paul Smiths, preparing the historic rock garden at White Pine Camp for it's dedication in August. Mostly we placed and planted tray upon tray of saxatile perennials (from the nearby zone 3 nursery and the hopefully hardy contributions brought from our home gardens) to nestle among the 14 or more stone mounds created by landscape designer Frederic Heutte many years before.

Dick and Mary and any friends they could rally over the last two years had literally unearthed the garden from the surrounding forest and forest debris that had reclaimed it. The 12-inch plus diameter stumps among the mounds and pathways were testament to the success of nature's progress. It was a far cry from the garden's glory days in the 1920's when Grace Coolidge (yes, wife of President Calvin Coolidge) took her daily stroll there. The Georges equated digging into two feet of forest litter akin to an archeological excavation – and definitely, to my thinking, an immense labor of love given the extensive size of this garden.



As mentioned before, the rock garden was designed by Frederic Heutte, while serving as estate gardener for then owner of White Pine Camp, H.W. Deforest. President Coolidge honored Heutte with a presidential commendation in 1926 helping to launch his illustrious career. Heutte eventually worked his way south to Norfolk, Virginia where in 1936 he founded and was director of the Norfolk Botanical Garden (<http://www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org>).



Back at White Pine Camp our group got to do the fun part of gardening – planting! With the bones of the garden at last revealed, we, as a group, made short work of setting in plants - something that would surely have taken Dick and Mary the best part of their summer weekends to complete. Of course, we couldn't resist resetting some of the stonework and chopping out stumps and roots that had invaded the pathways. Lastly, we set in a background planting of shrubbery to transition from the forest backdrop to the intimate garden space that lay nestled within.

With the August dedication of the so-named Frederic Heutte Alpine Rock Garden in conjunction with the White Pine Camp Centennial celebration on August 10th (see the open invitation to Chapter members to attend below), I'll be most eager to see how our plantings have fared. And no doubt, observe the work that lies ahead to make the garden even better next year.

Carol Eichler, chair

Rock garden dedication at White Pine Camp

Dick and Mary George, AC-NARGS members and White Pine Camp Associates (www.whitepinecamp.com), have extended an invitation to our membership for the dedication of the historic and recently restored Frederic Heutte Alpine Rock Garden at the camp in Paul Smiths, N.Y., August 10. Our membership has been involved in consulting, contributing plants and in offering a hands-on work session. Carol Eichler, Chapter Chair, has been invited to participate in the ribbon-cutting and would love to share driving with anyone interested in attending. Contact her at carol_eichler@excite.com or 607-387-5823. If you plan to go, see the ACNARGS blog for more places Carol suggests visiting while you're in the area: acnargs.blogspot.com/2008/07/rock-garden-dedication-at-white-pine.html

News from National:

Some of you may have heard, and it is correct, the Calgary Chapter has canceled their offer to host an Annual 2009 meeting and that Columbia-Willamette Chapter has consented to encompass the Annual Meeting with their Western Winter Study Weekend in Portland in March.

Second, we have the opportunity now to nominate private gardens you think are great for the NARGS Linc & Timmy Foster Millstream Garden Award. (See <http://www.nargs.org/info/awards.html>.) NOW is the time to gather your photos of your candidate's garden while they look good.

Thanks for a great plant sale!

Thanks to all who volunteered to help make our May Plant Sale at Ithaca High School a success. We took in a record \$2975.15 plus 6 new memberships and two renewals.

Trip to Chanticleer

While I've heard this second-hand that Chanticleer is considered one of the country's best gardens, after a recent visit to this "pleasure garden" with Billie Jean Isbell, in this writer's humble opinion, I'm inclined to agree. I always have such an enjoyable— or one might say "pleasurable"— time there.



While it had been several years since my last visit, there were certain areas that I made a bee-line for. It's amazing how much is packed into this 30-acre garden. First stop, and the place where I seem to spend an inordinate amount of time at, is the Teacup Garden. While an Italianate fountain is the design focal point, my eyes focus on the myriad selection of exotic and tropical plants. Their website

(<http://www.chanticleergarden.org>) describes as a "seemingly chaotic opera of scents and sounds, colors and textures."

Of course, the Ruin Garden is a "must-see" with its Great Hall, Library, and Pool Room, all displaying a stone-cold sense of humor. Note a past issue of Green Dragon featured a few photos I took on an earlier visit. Wishing I had taken more, I made certain this time to shoot plenty of photos. I didn't seem to recall the extensive terraced rock garden immediately below resembling more an alpine meadow than mountainside. There were some well-placed and very large planted troughs among the plantings.

Beyond the rock garden (or Gravel Garden so-called at Chanticleer) meandering ever downhill is the Minder Woods and beyond the Ponds Garden (it was too early for their showy display of lotus) and Asian Woods Garden, noted for its collection of woodlanders native to Korea, Japan, and China – not however in its prime in early June. One notable addition (at least I don't recall) was a tea house comfort station tucked away amidst the rhododendrons and conifers.



Lastly, Billie Jean and I visited the House Garden with the estate home, inviting lawn chairs, and welcoming shade for us to relax and enjoy still more plantings and planters at poolside, terrace and sun porch featuring a mix of tropicals and year-round plantings.

Poppies in all their brilliance were at peak bloom throughout the grounds and one could anticipate the next show emerging in the large drifts of crocosmia, kniphofia, lillium and much more. The estate, originally noted for its wonderful tree and shrub plantings, are in themselves worthy of a focused visit, and which I confess I could only take in appreciatively but peripherally. This is a great place to come simply to relax and have a picnic and several visitors seemed to be doing just that.

To quote again from the Garden's website, "Chanticleer is indeed a pleasure garden, offering an escape from the rush of every day life and a place where one can feel like a personal guest of the Rosengarten family [its former owners]." If you go, Chanticleer is located north and west of Philadelphia, off the Pennsylvania Turnpike I-476, and about a 4-hour drive from downtown Ithaca.

Carol Eichler, chair

Coming Soon: A New Public Rock Garden in Corning

Congratulations are in order to the Spencer Crest Nature Center (<http://www.spencercrest.org>) in Corning for receiving a Norman Singer Endowment Grant from NARGS National to build a rock garden on their premises. The grant was submitted by Bill Plummer and endorsed by our Chapter's Board of Directors.

Bill, because of his extensive gardening experience, was asked to do the landscaping around a Pavilion at the nature center. The pavilion was just constructed in 2007 and dedicated to Bob and Hertha Rockwell. He proposed that a rock garden be constructed featuring plants endemic to Colorado, because that is where Bob spent his childhood before moving to Corning and where he took his family each summer. Bob and his wife have been lifelong collectors and have donated their collection of natural objects, including a mounted Passenger Pigeon, to the nature center's museum.

Site preparations for the new rock garden have already begun and will continue through the summer. The hope is to have the structural phase completed in time to plant dwarf conifers this fall thanks to a grant awarded by our Chapter. A planting of alpines next spring will complete the construction phase.

Volunteers are providing the muscle behind this project with ongoing maintenance being offered by Spencer Crest and Corning Rotary. This is an exciting outreach project that will not only educate the visitors to the Nature Center about rock gardens but also honor a great man and woman. The Adirondack Chapter is pleased to be able to offer our support. Hopefully we'll be hearing more about this garden from Bill in the future. If you want to get involved, please contact Bill Plummer at remmulp@stny.rr.com or 607-962-2640.

Carol Eichler, chair

Geoffrey Charlesworth's passing

From *The Semper Vivum*, the Genesee Valley Chapter newsletter: We are saddened to learn that Geoffrey Charlesworth has died. If you don't know of Geoffrey Charlesworth, he was one of the stalwarts of NARGS and with his partner, Norman Singer, produced beautiful gardens in Sandisfield, MA. His book, "The Opinionated Gardener," is a wonderful read, full of information and humor. You may remember his whimsical poem, "Why Did My Plant Die?" which was featured in our April 2007 newsletter. This exceptional man, generous with his time, talents and garden, will be greatly missed by everyone in NARGS. And here is Geoffrey's poem:

Why Did My Plant Die?

Geoffrey B. Charlesworth

You walked too close. You trod on it.
You dropped a piece of sod on it.
You hoed it down. You weeded it.
You planted it the wrong way up.
You grew it in a yogurt cup
But you forgot to make a hole;
The soggy compost took its toll.
September storm. November drought.
It heaved in March, the roots popped out.
You watered it with herbicide.
You scattered bonemeal far and wide.
Attracting local omnivores,
Who ate your plant and stayed for more.
You left it baking in the sun
While you departed at a run
To find a spade, perhaps a trowel,
Meanwhile the plant threw in the towel.
You planted it with crown too high;
The soil washed off, that explains why.
Too high pH. It hated lime.
Alas it needs a gentler clime.
You left the root ball wrapped in plastic.
You broke the roots. They're not elastic.

You walked too close. You trod on it.
You dropped a piece of sod on it.
You splashed the plant with mower oil.
You should do something to your soil.
Too rich. Too poor. Such wretched tilth.
Your soil is clay. Your soil is filth.
Your plant was eaten by a slug.
The growing point contained a bug.
These aphids are controlled by ants,
Who milk the juice, it kills the plants.
In early spring your garden's mud.
You walked around! That's not much good.
With heat and light you hurried it.
You worried it. You buried it.
The poor plant missed the mountain air:
No heat, no summer muggs up there.
You overfed it 10-10-10.
Forgot to water it again.
You hit it sharply with the hose.
You used a can without a rose.
Perhaps you sprinkled from above.
You should have talked to it with love.
The nursery mailed it without roots.
You killed it with those gardening boots.
You walked too close. You trod on it.
You dropped a piece of sod on it.

People

Questions? Want to find out how you can help the Chapter? Don't hesitate to contact one of the volunteers who help make everything happen. (This is the slate to be voted on at our Feb. meeting):

- **Chair/Membership:** Carol Eichler, carol_eichler@excite.com, 607-387-5823
- **Vice Chair/Program:** Robin Bell, rgb2@cornell.edu, 607-272-2074
- **Secretary:** Carolyn Yaeger, cao2@cornell.edu, 607-844-9462
- **Treasurer:** BZ Marranca, mmm10@cornell.edu
- **Program Assistants/Garden Trips and Tours:** Billie Jean Isbell, bji1@cornell.edu, 607-539-6484 and Donna Kraft, dkaft@twcny.rr.com, 315 696-8626
- **Plant sales:** David Mitchell, dwm23@cornell.edu, 607-342-3660 and BZ Marranca mmm10@cornell.edu 607-532-8813
- **Plant of the Month:** John Gilrein, basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu, 315-492-0844
- **Wurster Garden Coordinator:** Tom Myers tom@ithacanhs.org 607-273-2865
- **Membership:** Susanne Lipari sel3@cornell.edu 607-387-9308
- **Annual Picnic Host:** Judy Fogel jfogel@twcny.rr.com 607-275-3332
- **Newsletter editor/Webmaster:** Craig Cramer, cdramer@twcny.rr.com, 607-539-7233 and Nari Mistry nbm2@cornell.edu, 607-272-7496

Green Dragon Tales

Published eight times a year (Feb., March, April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov./Dec.). Submit articles by the fourth Friday of the month preceding publication to Craig Cramer: cdramer@twcny.rr.com. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be in **September**.

