



THE DIRT

Catching up on the Duke Gardens Volunteers

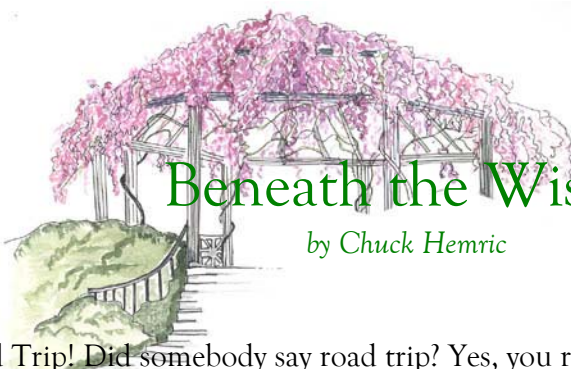
Editor: Jerry Sheehy

Fall/Winter 2008
www.sarahpdukegardens.org

Layout & Type: Sheryl Fowler

Newest Volunteers

Bob Ayers
Clarice Bullock
Susanna Chabinak-Uhlig
Garrett Grimshaw
Katherine Hernandez
Larry Howard
Ikuko Inoue
Julie Joblin
Katherine Kovach
Ann Milam
Lily Montgomery
Shelly Nowik
Alex Sholz
Li Tan
Zhong Tang
Luis Vergara
Shoh Yoshikai



Beneath the Wisteria

by Chuck Hemric

Road Trip! Did somebody say road trip? Yes, you read correctly, and mark your calendars now—May 7, 2009. A fantastic trip has been planned for Volunteers this coming spring. This will be a one-day trip on a comfortable Southern Coach bus.

Our first stop will be at Big Bloomers, located in Sanford. Big Bloomers specializes in perennials, annuals, and herbs, but offers seasonal crops such as poinsettias, garden mums, and Easter lilies, as well as a fabulous selection of flowering shrubs such as hydrangeas, buddleias, forsythias, and others. Several master gardeners are on staff to help answer your many gardening questions.

Our second visit will be to the NC Zoo in Asheboro for a behind-the-scenes horticultural tour encompassing both native and tropical rare plants. If interested in this exciting trip, contact Chuck Hemric for more details and to sign up.



Docent Training Dates

February 24

February 26
9-12 each day

March 3

Waterlily Competition Wrap-up

by Tamara Kilbane



This past summer's IWGS New Waterlily Competition was a memorable event at the Gardens. The season got off to a rough start with an impressive algae bloom in the Virtue Peace Pond that resulted in the transfer of all of the waterlily entries to the Fish Pool at the base of the terraces. One of my favorite memories from that week was of a young boy who saw me desperately skimming green scum from the pond's surface and yelled "look mom, there's a lady in the swamp!" I had to laugh—it was either that or cry!

Luckily, moving the competition to the Fish Pool turned out to be a very positive change that resulted in a record number of visitors viewing the lilies and voting for their favorites. The second annual People's Choice Awards drew twice as many voters as last summer, with approximately 1,400 people casting ballots. The official IWGS judging was held in mid-August using photos of each entry taken by volunteer John Wyman and myself.

This year, the public and official voting results were nearly identical, with the new hybrid 'Ultra Violet' from Florida Aquatic Nurseries taking top honors. This show-stopping lily holds its violet-purple flowers high above deep maroon leaves and is a prolific bloomer. Other winners included 'Virginia McLane' (Florida Aquatic Nurseries), 'Dreamy Skies' (McDonald's Aquatic Nursery), 'John Wedgwood' (hybridized by Andreas Protopapas of Cyprus), and 'Cliff Tiffany' (Fourth Generation Nursery).

The amount of work involved in hosting this competition can be daunting, but the "waterlily team" was once again up to the task. A big thank you to the determined crew of John Wyman, Karen Webbink, Jeff Prather, Jean Reniers and Diane Spatz who battled prolific algae, slippery rocks and destructive koi to make the 2008 competition the best to date.

We look forward to hosting the contest once again this year and invite you to join us pond-side for what promises to be another exciting summer—minus the algae!

Garden Trivia

Photos of unidentified gardens across the U.S. are part of the archives of the Smithsonian. Some of these gardens are in North Carolina! A project of the Smithsonian is to identify these "mystery" gardens. From the Smithsonian's website:

"The Archives of American Gardens' holdings include over 80,000 images of gardens dating from colonial times to the present. These images come from literally thousands of different sources and were not always accompanied by basic information (such as owner or location) that would identify them. Without this fundamental data, these images lose much of their informational value."

For more information and to help identify a garden, check out this website:

http://www.gardens.si.edu/horticulture/res_ed/AAG/mystery/mysterygardens.htm

Fall 2008 Plant and Craft Festival

by Jason Holmes, Horticulturist

WOW! How much more can I say about the awesome Plant and Craft Festival? We had an amazing public turnout, with everyone buying lots of plants. The weather could not have been nicer. My only regret, and I have very few about the sale, is that not every plant was blooming. But if every plant had been blooming, we would have had none left to sell at the end of the day. We now sell more native plants and new, unique, or rare varieties than ever before, and we are propagating more plants from the Duke Gardens' collection than ever before.

This year the number-one seller was camellias. And, of course, we never have enough yellow chrysanthemums or hellebores. Lu Howard sold all of the large houseplants; I think she sold some to herself! Larry Daniel and Molly Simes kept the fall tradition of "plant a mum." Rick Fisher was there with his camera to capture pictures of the hard-working volunteers and staff. I also saw lots of staff and volunteers offering advice and good gardening knowledge to the public. After all, that is what it is all about! We may not always have the plant the public is looking for, but we give them our honest information and ideas. That is all anyone can ask for!

Everyone was a huge help this year. I think it was a record for the number of volunteers who came forward the weeks and days before to set up for the sale and to take down the tents. I must say, I look forward to the Spring 2009 Plant Sale and to seeing everyone participate.

2009 Garden Writers Conference in Raleigh

by Tamara Kilbane

The Garden Writers Association, an organization composed of writers, editors, photographers, television and radio show hosts, botanical garden educators, and nursery-industry professionals from across the U.S. and Canada, will be holding its annual conference in Raleigh from September 23-28, 2009. This conference is very popular and well-attended each year, drawing an average of 300-500 registrants. Classes and garden tours are offered during the four-day gathering, and this year Sarah P. Duke Gardens will be featured prominently on the tour schedule.

As a member of the local planning committee for the 2009 conference, I'd like to request help from volunteers willing to serve as bus captains or tour guides during the conference. Bus captains should be familiar with the roadways around Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill as well as able to share interesting history or facts with passengers along the way. Guides should be knowledgeable about Duke Gardens and able to answer questions ranging from plant identification to historical facts.

If you are interested in helping out, please send me an email with your name and contact information. More details will be available in the coming weeks as plans are finalized. Thank you in advance for your help!

Remembering those Volunteers We Lost in 2008

Doris McCauley

Carroll Riggsbee

Harvey Hamrick

Edna Wilson

Quantum of Solace

by Jerry Sheehy

When I am in my car driving to the Sarah P. Duke Gardens, where I have been a volunteer for a number of years, I turn onto Duke University Road and begin to get that warm and comfortable feeling of “going home.” I grew up in the Gardens area of Swift Avenue, Sylvan Circle, and Burch Avenue, and remember my walks to the Gardens when visiting my dear aunt (Mamie Gooch) who lived on Swift Avenue. She had a lovely garden of her own on the corner of Swift and Sylvan Circle, with a gardener from Roll’s Florist to help with the digging. Many of the plants in my own garden came from her garden. Actually, I grew up on Burch Avenue and Ross Street (now Maplewood) across from the big tree-lined area which would be used for the building of University Apartments. Of course, most of the trees would be cut away. Prior to the development of the area, I remember running carefree through the trees, hair flying in the wind, and feeling very secure in doing so. (No thought of being accosted!) My friend Metta Metcalf, from Grade 1 at Morehead School, lived on Underwood Avenue across from the area. Many of my relatives are “resting in peace” in Maplewood Cemetery.

I remember, too, the small two-room house that I loved to visit on my way to see my aunt on Swift Ave. In that house lived a lovely aged couple, “Aunt” Mariah and “Uncle” Tom. They had the first rain barrel I ever saw under the eave of their small house. Aunt Mariah often asked me to share her “hot buttered cornbread.” So good! How sweet the memories!

As I drive on to the Gardens and turn in the gates, I remember that this is my place of solace. Often, when work became overly demanding, I retreated to the Sarah P. Duke Gardens for solitude. Even now, when it’s “too much” time, I escape for an hour or two and go to the Virtue Peace Pool in the Angle Amphitheater. In my childhood, I went with my friend and her father to the Violet Meadow on Anderson Street where I felt the same peace and solitude.

I have asked many of my friends and associates here what the Gardens has meant to them. Nnenna Ene, a Duke student and educational assistant here at the Doris Duke Center, feels that the Gardens is a place of peace and beauty, and adds so much contentment to her university life.

Inga Headrick, a volunteer, shared her thoughts about her young life in Jakobstad, Finland, with gardening parents. Her high school there was almost surrounded by gardens. She said that because of those gardens she really felt a kinship with Duke Gardens on her very first visit. There were slopes on three sides of her school which were originally designed to form a green park area. The town gardener had different ideas and created an elegant botanical garden on the northern and western slopes, with a rock garden on the remaining slope which was extensive and the most interesting because of the geological conditions. Thus, leaning on fond memories, Inga collects new insights into gardening at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens and loves every moment of being at the Gardens on Anderson Street.

So much for my memories of yesteryear and how we miss those peaceful days. The holidays are over and it’s time to concentrate on the good things in life such as friendships, kindness to one another, and love for everyone (if possible). HAPPY NEW YEAR! Spring will be here before you know it! Think daffodils, tulips, iris, wisteria, etc., all in bloom and the warm breezes of Spring with us again.

New Volunteer Opportunity

Interested in learning more about invasive plants and how to get rid of them? Duke Gardens is looking for volunteers for a new Invasive Eradication Team. This group will travel to sites across the central part of the state to help other non-profits such as schools, nature centers, and preserves remove invasive plants from their properties. We will get together approximately once a month to conduct these invasive removals. A one-day training will be conducted with Duke Gardens staff once we have a team put together. We’re looking for about ten eager volunteers to make up the group. Our first trip will be this spring to the Sylvan Heights Waterfowl Center in Scotland Neck to help them with a chinese privet problem. For more information, or to join the team, please contact Curator Stefan Bloodworth at sbloodwo@duke.edu. We look forward to working with you!

Six Degrees of Sarah P. Duke Gardens

by Nan Len

Sarah P. Duke Gardens and Ernest Hemingway

This is another installment in "Six Degrees of Sarah P. Duke Gardens," my series about the connections of our Gardens to people and things that you might not expect.

You may remember that Ellen Biddle Shipman (1869-1950) designed the Terraces. She and her husband, Louis Evan Shipman, had three children: Ellen (1894-?), Evan (1904-1957), and Mary (1908-?). Louis Shipman was a playwright, author, and editor of the first *Life* magazine (a humor and general-interest magazine that ran from 1883 to 1936) for two years beginning in 1922. After Ellen and Louis were married, they moved to a colony of artists in Cornish, New Hampshire. There, they got to know Charles Platt, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and Maxfield Parrish as well as many other painters, writers, sculptors, and other talented people. The Cornish Arts Colony is an interesting subject all to itself, and in the References at the end of this article, I have included a link to a website you might find interesting.

Eventually, Ellen and Louis parted company, and Louis moved to Europe, finally settling in France. Evan visited his father in Paris in 1924. Evan had decided on a literary career, and while in Paris went to find the editor of a small magazine hoping to sell some of his poetry. When he got to the address he had been given, instead of the editor (who had moved back to the United States), Evan found Ernest and Hadley Hemingway. The two men struck up a friendship that lasted many years. Literature was their first connection, but they also enjoyed horse racing and hanging out in bars.

Ellen and Louis divorced in 1927. When Louis died in France in 1933 (on his 64th birthday), Evan was there. Evan fought with the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War and was a sergeant major during World War II. He did publish a volume of poems as well as a novel based on harness racing, but his reputation was made as an expert on Thoroughbred and harness racing. When he died in New York in 1957, he was on the staff of the *Daily Racing Form* and was a turf columnist for the *New York Morning Telegraph*. The Evan Shipman Handicap, a race restricted to New York-bred Thoroughbred horses, three-years-old and up, is run at Belmont Park.

How did Ellen influence her son, Evan? Of course, it is impossible for strangers to know, but there is a hint in Hemingway's memoir, *A Moveable Feast*, of Evan's life in Paris.

In a chapter called "Evan Shipman at the Lilas," Hemingway tells a short tale of meeting Evan at La Closerie des Lilas, a café that attracted many of the writers and artists of the day. There, the two friends have a drink and Evan explains that the management of the bar has changed and all of the waiters have been ordered to shave off their mustaches. Both men know what an indignity this will be for the staff, especially for their friends André and Jean.



A photograph of La Closerie des Lilas ("Pleasure Garden of the Lilacs") today

Several days later, Hemingway stops by the Lilas to write and he is served by André, who no longer has his mustache. Hemingway asks how Jean is taking it.

"Tell him I asked for him."

"Of course," André said. "I hope it will not take him too long to reconcile himself."

"Please give him Mr. Shipman's greeting too."

"Mr. Shipman is with him," André said. "They are gardening together."

By all accounts, Evan seems to have been a charming man who made friends easily, mostly by his kind and gentle manner. There is a long article by Robert Risch called “Evan Shipman: friend and foil” which includes memories of Evan not only from Hemingway but also from his family and friends. This article suggests that both Evan and Hemingway shared an uneasy relationship with their mothers; nevertheless, when Evan died, he was buried in Gilkey Cemetery in New Hampshire near his mother, Ellen.

References:

Cornish Arts Colony in Cornish and Plainfield, NH, 1885-1930.

<http://www.crjc.org/heritage/N08-16.htm>

“Evan Shipman: friend and foil” by Robert Risch. *The Hemingway Review* vol. 23, no.1 (Fall 2003), pgs. 42-57.

Available online: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/hemingway_review/v023/23.1risch.html

Graves of Ellen Shipman and Evan Shipman

Search their names in Find a Grave: <http://www.findagrave.com/index.html>

(the Internet never ceases to amaze me!)

It's Party Time!

by Jerry Sheehy

The volunteers had received their invitations to the party, and had joyfully responded with a “yes,” for it was time for the annual Volunteer Holiday Party. The time on the invitation was 2:00 in the afternoon at the Kirby Holland Room—one thing appeared different on the invitation however. Staff awards were to be presented for the first time! And, about time, methinks.

When we arrived at the party, we were encouraged to visit the buffet table for some holiday treats and then invited to be seated as the program began. We were given “lucky” raffle tickets, as Jason Holmes had brought plants from the greenhouse to be used as prizes. (My ticket was not “lucky” for I did not win one.)

Then came time for the “staff gifts.” Lois Oliver was in charge of this part of the program and presented each member of the staff with “gifts” befitting their personalities and performances during the year. There was much laughter and all in good fun as each person accepted his/her award with alacrity. It took specialized “shopping” by Lois to come up with some of those awards—yes, indeed!

We had a guest appearance by Jerry Bullock, husband of Clarice from The Terrace Shop, who played holiday songs on the piano. Between good food, good friends, table hopping, winning plants, and much laughter, it was a really fine event. Thanks, again, to the staff for making us feel so appreciated. Happy New Year to all!



Sarah P. Duke Gardens
Box 90341
Durham, NC 27708-0341