



Feb 2006



Acton Garden Club



Spring Newsletter

President's Message

Dear Acton Garden Club Friends,

It's hard to believe two months have passed since our smashing Christmas luncheon and workshop with Thelma! However, we have not been idle over the Winter months, with both the Horticulture Study Group and the Floral Design Group meeting and attracting loyal members. Junior Gardeners also had an attendance of eleven children at their meeting where they took home plant lights and planted bulbs. The best news in January was the notice that we had been awarded \$500.00 from the 'Let Freedom Ring' grant which we had applied to for Acton's Public Safety Building. Another outstanding piece of "teamwork"! Congratulations.

Now is the time to sign up for this year's Community Service Committees. As a service organization for our community, we offer many opportunities to participate in civic beautification, historic gardens or garden therapy. Each one guarantees rewarding experiences.

Our Annual meeting and Luncheon is on the horizon so mark your calendars for our Club celebration at The Shaker Hills Golf Club on Tuesday, April 4, 2006 at 10:00 am.

Finally, and most important of all, is The Plant Sale! The Ways & Means committee has been running craft workshops already for the Boutique. The clipboards will be available at every meeting so please ensure your name is on one or more committees! This is our only fundraiser and requires 100% participation of our members. Thank you.

While we await the arrival of Spring and being out in our gardens again let us enjoy and learn from our wonderful February & March programs!

Laura

Laura Lindop

**Reserve Saturday, May 20th for the
Acton Garden Club Plant Sale!**

Upper photo: Thelma Shoneman's interpretation of "Covered Cup, Paul Storr" for *Flora in Winter* at the Worcester Art Museum, January 26—29, 2006.

Lower photo: January Jr. Gardener Horticulture Workshop "Indoor Bulbs & Light Stand".

Ways and Means - Plant Sale

Submitted by: Sue Nordhausen and Julie Dion-Soberg, Co-chairs

It's time to start getting serious about the Spring Plant Sale!! Do hope that you have all noticed that it is being held a little later this year. Instead of the Saturday before Mother's Day, it will be held the following weekend, May 20th. The plant vendors all felt we were holding it a little too early for the annuals and yet this new date will still be early enough for the perennials to get a good start.

The good news is that at the December Holiday Workshop, all the plant sale committee chairs were filled. Thank you to all who volunteered for these leadership positions. Now is the time for all garden club members to find the committee that best suits your individual talents and abilities. It isn't a question of whether to volunteer, but rather, where to volunteer!! As members we have already agreed to support our club's fund raising activities, and this one big "splash" in the Spring is it! The sign up sheets will be at the February meeting and the March meeting. If you cannot attend either of these meetings, please call Sue Nordhausen at (263-7215) to see what slots are available. Thank you all.

The Boutique Committee is already off to a running start. The first of a series of four decoupage workshops has been held, with three or four more to follow. This committee also is requesting donations for the boutique from all members. If you have a particular craft that produces saleable products the boutique would appreciate them. However, white elephants, re-gifting, and specially purchased items are also sought. This special little area "under the tent" is a valuable added source of income.

Plans are also underway for special interest sections, such as: special plant combinations and soils for planters; suitable plants and information for Waterwise gardens; and low profile spreading plants for rock gardens. These are all new and will have a place on the above mentioned clipboard for members to become involved.

We are asking you all to keep your fingers crossed for a nice warm Spring day on May 20th. (There's no way a maverick "Nor-Easter" could hit us again this year!)

So once again we are about to embark on the fast path to our biggest and only fund raiser of the year. Thank you all for your support, humor and willingness to make this another big success.

Boutique

Submitted by Judy Shuppert and Mary Lou McCall, Co-chairs

Mary Lou McCall and Judy Shuppert are collecting items to be sold in the Boutique at the 2006 Plant Sale in May. Items can be new, re-gifted or "white elephant" items in very good condition. If you have any donations, please call to arrange delivery or pick-up:
Mary Lou McCall, 219 Pope Road - (978) 369-1666 or
Judy Shuppert, 72 Alcott St - (978) 263-7554

Horticulture Study Group

Submitted by Judy Dembsey

As a result of the snowstorm on Sunday, February 12th, **the February 14th Horticulture Study Group meeting has been cancelled.** Lynn Bruce's February program, "*Japanese Plants in their Native Land and New England*" has been rescheduled for April 11th at Maureen Christmas's home, replacing the "Come and Share" program at Bev Brownson's home that was previously announced.

Floral Design Study Group

Submitted by Wendy Tarson, Chairman

"Springtime in Tokyo" with Kaye Vosburgh

Learn the art of Ikebana with Kaye Vosburgh, Soketsu Ikebana, Master Judge and teacher. March 21st, 9:15am at St Matthew's Church. Sign up at the February and March general meetings or call or email Wendy Tarson (897-8458, wendy.tarson@verizon.net).

COST \$20 - MUST BE PREPAID BY MARCH 7 MEETING.

Space is limited so sign up soon!

Supplies to bring:

Paper bag, Cutting bowl (a small butter tub or mixing bowl), bucket for branches, pitcher, scissors (Joyce Chen or regular) and pruners, 2 kenzans, and 2 containers like a pie plate or other 9" round, 10 or 12" rectangle or square. Can use same containers as last class. Kenzans and containers will be available for purchase. Please preorder from Wendy.

2006 Fall Flower Show!!!!

Submitted by: Maureen Christmas and Thelma Shoneman, Flower Show Co-chairs

Music Through the Ages – a Floral Interpretation is the working title of the Acton Garden Club's Standard Flower Show to be held on Sept. 25-26, 2006 at the Acton Memorial Library. Set-up will be Sept. 24, 2006. Six design classes will focus on different periods of music ranging from Classical and Opera through the Roaring Twenties and Big Band eras to Jazz and Rock 'n' Roll. Horticulture classes will showcase the members' gardening talents. Special exhibits will include an "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing" Education Section as well as a Junior Gardener Design Class. Planning is in the early stages. Look for more details and a preliminary schedule at future garden club meetings and on the Acton Garden Club website! (www.ActonGardenClub.org)

Community Service News

Submitted by Maureen Christmas, Vice-President

It's the time of year to decide what committee you'd like to be on to do your community service obligation. Committees change every April, offering the opportunity to learn about the different gardens the Acton Garden Club maintains, to help beautify the town or to bring sunshine inside via the garden therapy program. You may sign up for the same committee you were on previously or a new one each year. The following chart will help you decide which is the best committee for you. Where the question of "are children allowed?" is addressed, it is assumed these would be preschool children. The child may actually be able to walk but would be restrained in a back pack or stroller rendering the child non-ambulatory. The next column on the chart addresses whether the opportunity to work on your own time, instead of a scheduled workday, is available.

How to sign up - You may sign up in one of two ways:

1. You can sign-up on the clipboards that will be passed at the February and March meetings. If you sign up on more than one clipboard – it will be assumed you would like to be on more than one committee!
2. You can return the pink sheet in this newsletter indicating the committee you would like to work on. Please give two or three choices in the order you prefer in case your first choice is already full.

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Physical labor</u>	<u>Children allowed?</u>	<u>Work Outside of Scheduled Workday?</u>
Civic Beautification	planting, weeding	Yes, if non-ambulatory, near busy roads	Yes for limited plantings Yes for maintenance
Acton Arboretum Herb Garden	clean-up, planting weeding, mulching	Yes	Yes
Wildflower Garden at MMH	raking, mulching, planting, weeding	Yes	Yes
Daffodil Run at MMH	raking, mulching planting, weeding	Yes, if non-ambulatory, near busy roads	Yes
Garden Therapy at Emerson Hosp.	Minimal	NO	NO
Life Care Center of Acton Nursing Home	Minimal	NO	NO

Remember, as an Active Member, it is your responsibility to work at least four workdays each year on a Community Service Committee.

Flora in Winter

Submitted by: Maureen Christmas

Three members of the Acton Garden Club recently participated in *Flora in Winter*. *Flora in Winter* is the combined effort of Worcester Museum of Art and Tower Hill – the home of the Worcester Horticultural Society. It has become an annual event with designers interpreting pieces of art at the museum and a different theme each year at the Tower Hill location. This year's theme was Ancient Rome – Deities and Architecture. Maureen Christmas, Co-chair of the Tower Hill location, created an underwater design for each of the bathrooms interpreting the Roman Baths. Laura Lindop created a mass design inspired by the Roman Goddess Venus. Thelma Shoneman showcased her talents at the museum with a delicate interpretation of a silver chalice. It was an enjoyable event to both participate in and to view.



Roman Baths, Ladies Room
Maureen Christmas



Roman Baths, Mens Room
Maureen Christmas



Venus, Orangerie
Laura Lindop

Waterwise Gardening Committee

Submitted by: Pat Cumings, Cathy Fochtman, Jane Olesin, Trudy Walther

Jane Ceraso, Acton Water District Environmental Manager, has invited one of our committee members to speak to the New England Water Works Association meeting on March 22nd about our 6-year public education efforts with the Acton Water District.

A booklet is being published this month by the Acton Water District and the Acton Garden Club. It is titled, *Using Water Wisely, A Guide to Conserving Water in Acton, Massachusetts*. This glossy, color guide for Acton residents will be distributed to new customers at the Water District. Jane has encouraged us to submit the booklet for a Federation publication award.

The new booklet will be available at our next Waterwise Seminar, *Using Water Wisely*, on Thursday, March 9, 2006, 7:30pm at the Acton Water District, 693 Massachusetts Ave. (Rt. 111). We will discuss waterwise tips for the homeowner, both indoors and outdoors. Massachusetts needs to preserve water and you may learn how to save on your water bill. All attendees will be entered in a drawing for a free rain barrel! For more information, please RSVP Jane Ceraso at (978) 263-9107.

Cookie Recipe

Submitted by: Joan Yatteau, excellent cook

Chewy Orange Almond Cookies

Everyone asked for the recipe for this macaroon-like cookie from Martha Stewart served at the last board meeting. Recipe says it makes two dozen; mine made more, perhaps because I didn't weigh the nuts. "It's important to weigh the nuts for accurate amounts, as volume can differ enormously." Extra cookies keep well, covered in plastic wrap and frozen.

4 1/4 ounces sliced almonds (about 1 1/4 cups) (divided)
3/4 cup granulated sugar (divided)
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
Zest of 2 oranges, finely grated (about 1/4 cup)
1 teaspoon anise seed, crushed
3 large egg whites, room temperature
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside.
2. Select the best almond slices, enough for 3 per cookie (approx. 3/4 ounce), and reserve them for later use.
3. In the bowl of a food processor, blend 3 1/2 ounces of the almonds (about 1 cup) with 1/2 cup sugar until the almonds are finely ground. Transfer the almond mixture to a medium bowl. Stir in the flour, orange zest, and crushed anise seed.
4. Using an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, whisk the egg whites, salt, and remaining 1/4 cup sugar to soft, glossy peaks. Fold the egg-white mixture into the dry ingredients just until blended.
5. Spoon level tablespoons of the batter 2 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets. My batter was fairly thick (should have weighed the nuts) and didn't spread much when cooked. I found I had to spread the dropped cookie into about a 2-inch round with a spoon. They looked charming even when not exactly round. Using the reserved almond slices, arrange 3 sliced almonds on each cookie like the petals of a flower with the points of the almond slices meeting in the middle. Dust the cookies lightly with confectioners' sugar.
6. Bake until cookies are lightly browned along the edges, about 12 minutes. Cool slightly before removing cookies from the sheets with a spatula. Dust with a bit more confectioners' sugar if you like. Let cool.

A Chance to Win...

Submitted by: Karin Victor, Technology

...An Official Acton Garden Club gardening hat; yes, like the one that we sold at the Plant Sale last year! Come and browse the Club's website, (www.ActonGardenClub.org), collect as much information as you can and then click on the "Take the Quiz" on the main page. When you have completed the quiz click on "E-mail the results" and list your results (no one is looking at how well you did, just that you participated) in the e-mail and hit send. You will then be entered in the drawing for the last remaining AGC gardening hat. The drawing will take place at the Annual Meeting in April. Have fun and enjoy discovering and seeing photographs of the many exciting activities that our Club participates in.

Nominating Committee

Submitted by: Sally Patrick, Jane Olesin, and Sandy Bonsagni

The Nominating Committee, Sally Patrick, Jane Olesin, and Sandy Bonsagni, would like to thank Acton Garden Club members who have responded positively to our requests to serve on the Board. The committee looks forward to presenting the slate of officers and committee chairman to the membership at the Annual Meeting in April. The Nominating Committee would like to encourage members to always be on the lookout for people who would like to join the Acton Garden Club. One of the strengths of our club is the diversity of talents that our members share. In order to remain a vital positive force in Acton, we need to continue to add to our members.

Reasons People Volunteer

- 1) Fill time
- 2) Repay a perceived indebtedness
- 3) Because someone they love benefits
- 4) Because someone they love is also involved
- 5) To set an example for children
- 6) To meet people
- 7) To please someone else
- 8) To have fun
- 9) To gain skills
- 10) To gain experience
- 11) To be visible
- 12) To gain credit
- 13) To find happiness
- 14) To use otherwise unused gifts or skills
- 15) Because of tradition
- 16) To be part of a group
- 17) To maintain health
- 18) To explore new ideas
- 19) To heal
- 20) To avert loneliness
- 21) Because of interest
- 22) As a hobby
- 23) Out of concern
- 24) To counterpoint paid work
- 25) As an extension of a job
- 26) Because they were assigned
- 27) To survive tragedy
- 28) To test leadership skills
- 29) To gain recognition
- 30) To acquire self-confidence
- 31) To be a change agent
- 32) To right a wrong
- 33) To work in a safe place
- 34) To have a purpose
- 35) To be a "good neighbor"
- 36) To get out of the house
- 37) To keep active
- 38) To experience new lifestyles
- 39) To feel a sense of power and success

Looking Forward to a New Season on Daffodil Run

Submitted by: Sydney Storment and Joan Yatteau, Co-chairs

The establishment of Daffodil Run as a community service site with its own committee separate from the Wildflower Garden, also on Meetinghouse Hill, has offered both committees more time for planning, planting, and renewal of the gardens. As part of this effort, Sydney Storment and Joan Yatteau, co-chairs of Daffodil Run, had the opportunity to walk the garden with Sue Whitcomb on a bright mid-November morning.

We asked Sue to suggest shrubs and perennials that would be able to tolerate the conditions of the site, add textural interest, and extend the season of color in the garden. Among her suggestions were *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Annabelle' for its late season bloom and informal habit, several slower growing, early-summer-blooming lilacs, plus a blue lilac that blooms in the spring, a newer *Spirea japonica* cultivar, 'Neon Flash', with red blooms in mid to late summer and purple fall foliage, and a number of perennials such as *Rudbeckia*, *Nepeta*, *Salvia*, *Eupatorium*, and in particular *Sedum* 'Vera Jameson' or 'Rosy Glow' for the difficult area on the bank below the pine trees. We're eager to start a new growing season and look forward to taking the first steps to implement these exciting ideas. We want to thank Sue for her invaluable help, and for her time, interest, and wonderful suggestions.

Meeting House Hill - Wildflower Garden

Submitted by: Gena Manalan and Jane Olesin, Co-chairs

This year the committee spent most of its efforts trying to control invasive weeds that were threatening the garden. When the weeds were cleared, we then were able to mark the desirable plants to be donated for the annual plant sale, or to be transplanted within the garden. We also identified large trees that were diseased for removal. Dean Charter, Acton's Director of Municipal Properties, brought in his crew and heavy equipment and removed the trees in the fall. With those trees removed, the garden is light and airy and ready for new plant material.

Sue Whitcomb helped us identify what plant material would enhance the garden and thrive in the location. With that information, we developed a landscaping plan and applied for a grant which would allow us to buy the necessary material. If we are successful in getting the grant, the planting of the new material will begin this spring. Stop by this spring and enjoy the new look of the garden.

Awards, Awards, Awards!!! Part II

Submitted by: Maureen Christmas, Awards Chairman

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, The Acton Garden Club received many awards at recent state annual meetings. This article will familiarize you with what the actual awards were, beyond just knowing the title.

At the state level, the AGC won the *Publicity Press Book Award for Large Clubs*. The book was then forwarded to the region and the national levels where it also won awards. The

Awards, Awards, Awards!!! Part II (con't)

Publicity Press Book is a compilation of every mention in print or photo the AGC has as either a full club or as individuals from the club. Examples of a full club mention would be the Plant Sale or a meeting announcement. Examples of individual mention would be participation in *Flora in Winter* or at the *New England Flower Show*. If you see your name in print on a garden club related activity, please be sure to talk to our Publicity Chair (currently Susanne Fuller) to see if she already has it or to get an original copy to her. You may be mentioned in a publication she wouldn't necessarily see.

The AGC also won the *Mildred S. Parker Conservation Award* from the state for the wonderful Waterwise Gardening Program. This award is given for the acquisition, preservation and/or development of the natural resources within the boundaries of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The book of evidence was then duplicated because the State Awards Committee wanted it to be considered for *two* awards at the national level, which the project did receive: *Conservation Education - The Hazel Johnson Award*, awarded for the most comprehensive work and/or study in conservation education, and *Presidential Objectives, Large Club*.

The 2003 Standard Flower Show was also a winner. It received the *Jane D. Porter State Flower Show Award*. This is a pewter bowl given by the Hingham Garden Club, in memory of their devoted member Jane D. Porter, to the garden club which stages a flower show receiving the *highest point scoring of all shows* applying for a State Flower Show Award. The book of evidence was then forwarded to the national level where it received the top award for a *Standard Flower Show Staged in a Public Building*. National Flower Show Awards are non-competitive between states at the club level. (Translation: AGC was not in competition against a Maine garden club. The State Awards Committee could only submit one show in each category. National then decides if the show warrants an award.) The schedule for the flower show received *The Ruth A. Wallack Schedule Award*. Given in memory of Ruth A. Wallack by the Beth Shalom Garden Club of Needham, a silver tray is presented to the garden club with the most creative design division.

The *Evelyn D. Cronin Horticultural Award* was given to the AGC for an outstanding horticulture meeting, workshop or series of horticulture workshops for the Horticulture Study Group's year-long series on landscape design. This program also won the *Virginia F. Thurston Landscape Design Award* - a regional award which came with \$100.

The *Barbara May Website Award* was given for the first time in 2004. The AGC, through the technological wizardry of Karin Victor, won this award.

A point to note on awards is that a club usually cannot receive the same award two consecutive years. For more information on awards, be sure to check both the state and national websites. There are many different awards. Reading through them may spark an idea for a project or help you do your project better through its guidelines.



*Come and socialize with
new and old friends at the
Annual Meeting*



April 4, 2006—10:00 am
At the Shaker Hills Golf Club, 146 Shaker Road, Harvard, MA

The business meeting will begin at 10:00 am with a friendship hour to follow.
We will dine on a **choice** of: **Pistachio Crusted Paillard** (Chicken Breast with Fennel & Granny Smith Slaw, topped with Tarragon Dijon Sauce and served over Florentine Rice); **or Filet of Salmon** (Oven Poached and served with a Cold Cucumber Dill Sauce, served with Lemon Parsley Rice). Lunch includes Tossed Green Salad, Assorted Roll Basket, Chocolate Mousse Dessert and Coffee, Tea, or Decaf.

The last date to reserve your space for this luncheon will be March 14, 2006.
If you have any questions, or have dietary restrictions, please contact:

Noreen Rowe, (263-0562), chillyllama@hotmail.com

It's a great time...don't miss it!

Acton Garden Club, Inc.

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