



Takoma Horticultural Club

A hardy perennial since 1916



April 2016

The Takoma Horticultural Club presents:

Pruning Woody Plants

Wednesday, April 20, 7:30 p.m.

*District of Columbia Takoma Park Branch Library
416 Cedar Street NW, Washington D.C.*

Whether you want to learn the basic principles of pruning trees and shrubs, or refresh your memory on techniques and strategies, this lecture will cover it all. We'll discuss why, when and how to prune all your favorite woody plants.

Our speaker, Christopher Elenstar, is a gardener at Brookside Gardens in Montgomery County. The talk is free and open to the public. No need to RSVP. Bring a snack to share and wear a home-made nametag or one recycled from another event. Our April meeting is being held at the Takoma D.C. Library, where club meetings were held until 1950, when membership outgrew the facility. We hope to reach not only our members, but the wider Takoma Park/ Takoma D.C. Community in this 100th anniversary year. From the main Takoma Metro entrance, head west on Cedar Street to the corner of 4th Street. The Library is on your left. Street parking is available.

2016 THC Executive Committee

President: Katherine Lambert

Vice President: (vacant)

Treasurer: Taffy Turner

Secretary: Barbara Henderson

Director of Membership: Carole Galati

Webmaster: Cindy Walczak

Public Relations: Kathy Jentz

Listserv: Anne Hardman

Newsletter: Eileen Schramm, Diane Svenonius

Bulb Sale: Nancy Newton

100th Anniversary Committee Chair: Kathy Jentz

A Centennial Gift to the City

The Takoma Horticultural Club is working with City Gardener (and longtime Club member) Mike Welsh to create a new park on city property at the northwest corner of Piney Branch Road and Philadelphia Avenue. The park will reflect the 100-year relationship of the Club to the City of Takoma Park and be called Centennial Park.

The Club will seek donations from its members and grants from local organizations to procure plants. Club members Wendy Bell, Kit Gage and Taffy Turner are developing a plan for the space, emphasizing native plants where suitable. The City will put a new rock path across the middle of the plot. The space now has forsythia, quince and honeysuckle, two crape myrtle trees, other mature trees and a bus stop. Planting is expected to start in the fall.

For an account of the Club's contributions to Takoma Park and the Takoma, D.C. community over its first hundred years, see the next installment of "100 Years of THC" on page 2 of this newsletter.



Selecting the site of the planned THC Centennial Park. Photo: Kathy Jentz.

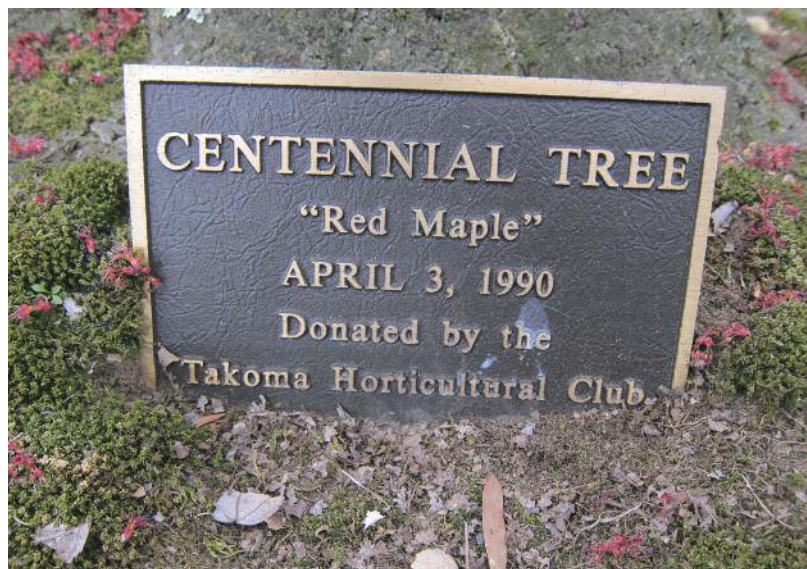
One Hundred Years of THC in the community

This is the third installment of a monthly series giving glimpses of the Takoma Horticultural Club at various times during its history. With the help of Historic Takoma Inc.'s President Diana Kohn, the 100th Anniversary Committee has access to meeting minutes, newsletters, reports, ledgers and other materials collected and preserved since its founding. Here we tell some of the history of THC's involvement in and contributions to the Takoma community in the District and Maryland.

"The aims of the Takoma Park Horticultural Improvement Club are to promote the culture of flowers and vegetables, to beautify Takoma Park through the improvement of its home grounds, parks and streets..." So declared its first Constitution. At the start, the area was known more for its trees than its flowers, "for at that time, the larger part of Takoma Park was forest trees, and the hillsides were covered with wild Azalea, Trailing Arbutus and Birdsfoot Violets." In fact, the Club proposed to the Town of Takoma Park that a Forest Warden be appointed (the idea was rejected). A 1923 THC newsletter says, "The problem which confronts most of the members... is how to have flowers, lawns and gardens and still retain our trees... While many of our lesser attractions are the growth of but a year, the trees are the product of an ordinary lifetime, and we should hesitate before sacrificing one of them."

But the club took its public gardening mission seriously. "Within a year after its establishment, the THC was energetically involved with civic activities in the geographic area During March of 1917 it offered to help the town Council "in securing several small tracts of land on various streets for parks." Club programs—cooperative buying of bulbs, plants and soil amendments; plant sales, flower shows, talks, and cash donations for "beautification" are credited through the decades for the home gardens and parks that mark the city today. In 1933 and again in 1958 THC helped the Takoma, D.C. PTA to develop a plot at the elementary school for flowering shrubs and perennials, and members donated plants. In 1993 and 1997 the Club donated sums for butterfly gardens to three neighborhood schools. "Landscape Gardener" was an elected office, and the incumbent each year gave advice to members and organizations which requested it.

During World War II, the Club stressed the importance of growing vegetables and saving seeds, which were coming to be in short supply. It procured a piece of land to serve as a Community Garden for interested members, and sent messages to the membership saying "It is hoped that every member of the Club will feel it his patriotic duty to do his 'Bit'" and "Blisters will be counted in making up the honor roll." The club also sponsored a Boys and Girls Garden Club, a predecessor of 4 H Clubs.



Plaque at Memorial Park in honor of the Centennial of the City's incorporation. Photo: Diane Svenonius.

In 1959, Club members cleared and planted in front of Swartzell Methodist Home for Children (an orphanage at 2nd and Sheridan St. NW). In the early sixties, the Club supported the city's Azalea Committee in its huge planting effort to bring about "Azalea City". Many club members were also members of the committee. The Club donated \$300 to purchase azaleas for Upper Portal Park at Piney Branch Road and Eastern Avenue. A large flowering cherry was added later, and the gifts were acknowledged by a bronze plaque. Long-time THC member Clarence Casey worked for the City's Public Works Department, where he rooted and fostered over 15,000 azalea cuttings, which were distributed free to City residents. THC and the City jointly held plant sales and flower shows, particularly azalea shows, and members planted azaleas in their yards. A 1991 *Takoma Voice* article about the Club's Diamond Jubilee proclaimed "*Members at the Root of City's Lush Landscape*," and asked, "Would Takoma Park have the wealth and diversity of azaleas, flowers and other plantings without the THC? Probably not."

Between 1966 and 1998, records show cash donations made to Friends of the Thomas Siegler Gardens; Garden Resources of Washington (GROW), which sponsored community food gardens; and

(cont'd on next page)

\$2,000 for a greenhouse at Takoma Park Middle School. The Library where the Club was founded also received frequent attention, in gratitude for years of hosting its members and housing its archives. In 1989, for example, the Club arranged for landscaping of the space in front with holly, red maple, shrubs and flowers, and members cleared the site for planting. Historic Takoma and the Takoma Park Horticultural Club donated funds toward two bronze plaques that noted the importance of B.Y. Morrison and the significance

of Takoma Junction (Club member Dorothy Cichello spoke at the dedication of B.Y. Morrison Park), and in 1990 the Club planted a red maple at Memorial Park in honor of the Centennial of the City's incorporation, with a plaque which can still be seen. This year, observing its own Centennial, the Club will carry on this long tradition with commemorative plantings at the corner of Piney Branch Road and Philadelphia Avenue, as described on page 1 of this newsletter. —*Diane Svenonius*

Volunteers Wanted!

During the Historic Takoma House and Garden Tour on May 5, the Club will host a Centennial Hospitality Booth (in our tent) on Valley View Avenue at Willow Avenue. Two volunteers are needed for each of two shifts, 1 – 3 pm and 3 – 5 pm, to offer cookies, drinks and THC information. Contact Kathy Jentz (laserblast@aol.com) to volunteer.

Save the Dates for These Open Gardens

The Club will hold four Open Gardens in June and July. All four are wonderful, diverse and inviting!

Save these dates:

June 10 *Alison Gillespie*

June 17 *Priscilla Labovitz*

June 24 *Monica Cretzu*

July 1 *Wendy Bell*

The May newsletter will have summary descriptions of each of the gardens. About a week before each Open Garden, the details and directions for that garden will appear on the website (www.takomahort.org) and on the Yahoo discussion list.

The Open Gardens are a great way to learn, enjoy, network and relax on a Friday evening. —*Carole Galati*

All About Lawns

At the Club's March talk, Geoffrey Rinehart, of the U.S. National Arboretum's Grass Roots exhibit, told us what we need to know about growing healthy beautiful grass: choosing the right variety, mowing, watering, aerating, and especially the art of fertilizing. Care with these procedures should allow you to spend much less time defending the lawn against weeds and lawn pests. We're in a "transition" zone between cool- and warm-adapted grasses, so much so that new varieties are tested in Maryland for their resistance to heat and drought. "Zoysia has a good niche in this area", Geoff said. Though yellow-brown in winter, it stays thick, puts up with feet, and doesn't need much watering. Lawn-owners are too focused on greenness, he said. The functionality of turf—tolerance of drought and wear—should be considered.

Those who missed the talk when the subway shutdown caused an early closing of the DC Library can see the Grass Roots exhibit and hear the talk at the Arboretum, April 29, 10 am– 12 noon. Space is limited so email Geoffrey.rinehart@ars.usda.gov.

Centennial Dues

As we creep slowly into spring and continue our Centennial Year planning, we realized that we need to invigorate our funds to pay for our Centennial Garden and our Centennial Gala on August 27, as well as speaker and venue fees. We do have almost 100 who are members in good standing; there are about 60 who have not paid the 2016 dues, which were due January 1st. Please let me know if you are not sure of your membership status (cagalati@rcn.com). To renew, just send a short note and check for \$12 made out to "THC". Upcoming "Members Only" events include our Plant Exchange of May 22, our Fourth of July Parade THC marching group and our Centennial Gala on August 27.

We want to thank those of you who have already paid their 2016 dues. Special thanks go out to those of you who have mailed donations in response to the letter printed in the March and April Newsletters.

Mail membership dues checks to Carole Galati, 106 Melbourne Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20901. Thanks for your continued support of the best and oldest garden club in the area!

Thank You!

THC wishes to thank the generous members who have responded to the Centennial fund drive as of March 31:

Sedum

—

Aster

Anonymous

Rhododendron

Kit Gage
Kathy Jentz
Loretta Neumann
Diane Svenonius
Taffy Turner

Oak

Carole Galati
Jeff Trunzo

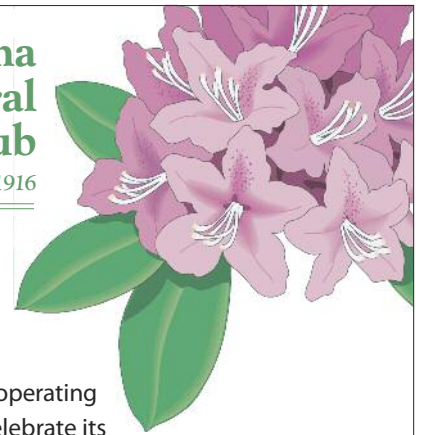
Current total: \$1,125.

We are 1/4 of the way to our \$4,000 goal!

See the last page of this newsletter for information about the fund drive.

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Takoma Hort Club Urges Members to Donate to Our Centennial Fundraising Campaign

Takoma Horticultural Club was founded in 1916 and is one of the oldest continuously operating garden clubs in the United States. In this 100th anniversary year of the club, we will celebrate its many contributions to the community with a variety of commemorative activities. You are an important part of the reason that the Club has thrived and grown these past 100 years, and we request the honor of your presence for our 100th anniversary celebration. **Please hold the date of Saturday, August 27, 2016, for our special anniversary event.**

The 100th Anniversary Committee has been working diligently to plan many activities to celebrate this important occasion. Research of the historical archives is underway to retrieve information about the Club's contribution to the community over the years. We are planning a commemorative community planting project, a window display at Historic Takoma, monthly articles for publication in the Club newsletter and website, a *Takoma Voice* article, a 100th anniversary themed marching contingent in the Fourth of July parade, additional gifts to the Takoma DC and Takoma Park libraries, refreshed Club graphics and logo, recordings of club members recollections in conjunction with Takoma Radio, proclamations by Takoma Park and the District of Columbia recognizing the club anniversary, and many other activities celebrating and publicizing our Club.

To do all of this, we need to raise additional funds from you, our core members and volunteers. We want to raise \$4,000 to support the anniversary year programs and celebration, and we want to raise this money in the first half of 2016. Your contribution now will greatly enhance the 100th anniversary year commemoration and your gift will be noted in the 100th anniversary program. In addition to your financial gift, we are also asking you to share information about 100th anniversary programs and activities that the Club could or should be doing, who can help organize these activities, and the names of organizations and individuals we should reach out to in order to include everyone associated with our Club.

Borrowing from The Takoma Foundation's tagline "Give where you live," this anniversary is an outstanding occasion to recognize the success of the past and to plan for the future so that our Takoma Horticultural Club can look forward to a 200th anniversary. Thank you for your generosity.

To make your donation, please bring your check to the next club meeting or mail your check to the Club treasurer, Taffy Turner, at 10207 Lorain Ave, Silver Spring 20901. Make checks out to THC. To make other arrangements, contact Kathy Jentz, THC 100th Committee Chair at Laserblast@aol.com.

100th Anniversary Program Activities Suggested Donor Levels

- \$ 25 Sedum
 - \$ 50 Aster
 - \$100 Rhododendron
 - \$250 Oak
-

We thank you for supporting us in the past and for your current support of the Club. In addition to the contribution levels above, can you offer a matching donation for a portion of our fundraising for the year, for instance, doubling the gifts of \$100, up to a certain limit? Have you thought about a legacy for Takoma expressed in the form of a horticultural support gift?

THC is not a tax-exempt organization so donations are not tax-deductible.