

Takoma Horticultural Club

A hardy perennial since 1916



July 2016

Starting July 4!

Check out the "100 Years of THC" display in the front window of Historic Takoma Inc.!

Open Garden: Wendy Bell & Vivian Fong

7211 Willow Ave., Takoma Park, MD

Friday, July 8, 2016, 5:30 to 7:30pm

Where plants are concerned, Wendy believes the more the merrier. Her gardens are a mix of woody trees and shrubs, perennials, grasses, bulbs, tropicals and vegetables. It is a wild, colorful, and multi-textured display. The permeable paver driveway and a welcoming blue bottle tree draw you into the gardens.

Wendy's gardening themes are four-season interest, plant diversity, attracting pollinators, and experimentation. Many of you enjoyed Wendy's garden on the Takoma Park House & Garden Tour in May. Come and enjoy a very different show in July!

Helpful Information: Parking is challenging in this tightly knit neighborhood, so please consider carpooling if possible. If the weather is questionable, we will post information on our Yahoo List the afternoon of July 8. If you get lost or have last minute questions, call Wendy: 301.891.2956.

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

Grow Your Own Cutting Garden

A Talk by Kathy Jentz, plus a Flower Show!

Wednesday, July 20 at Historic Takoma

Doors open at 7pm, talk starts at 7:30, Flower Show Prizes Awarded at 8:30

Why pay high florist prices? Kathy Jentz, Editor/Publisher, *Washington Gardener Magazine* will tell you how to grow your own flowers for cutting and enjoying in bouquets! We'll cover the best plants for local gardeners to have available for arranging in each Mid-Atlantic season and yes, we'll cover those that can grow in part-shade.

To be followed by an **Old-Fashioned Flower Show.**

Enter the best blooms in your garden in this mini-revival of Takoma Hort Club's flower shows of yesteryear as part of our on-going Centennial Celebrations. Categories include:

- ✿ best annual flower (Bring your flower entries in a bud vase.* Single bloom only,)
- ✿ best perennial flower (Bring your flower entries in a bud vase.* Single bloom only,)
- ✿ best shrub/tree flower (Bring your flower entries in a bud vase.* Single branch only,)
- ✿ best shade foliage (Bring your foliage entries in a bud vase.* Single leaf/branch only)
- ✿ best flowering houseplant
- ✿ best flower arrangement in a mason jar (jar decoration encouraged).

You may enter up to 3 times in each category. Judges include landscape designer Carolyn Mullet.

**Vases can be clear or green glass. Small glass water or soda bottles with all labels removed also may be used.*



Announcements

4th of July ! Marchers Needed!

More members are wanted to march with THC for the Fourth of July Parade! This year the club is celebrating its first hundred years in Takoma Park, and our theme is "100 Years of Gardening". Costumes and nostalgic paraphernalia are optional but very welcome.

Please let us know that you'll be joining us—email dbsvenonius@msn.com. There will be a potluck after the parade; details will be provided when you sign up. —Diane Svenonius

Our Open Gardens in June



Top to bottom: Alison explains her pollinator paradise (photo: Diane Svenonius). Priscilla's new shade garden encourages contemplation (photo: Katherine Lambert). Monica's garden of plenty uses every available asset, and has another visitor enjoying the bounty (photos: Eileen Schramm).

Trophy Hunting!

Over the years, the Club has won—or awarded as prizes—various trophies and platters, given to repeat winners in the annual flower shows. We would like to display these and other memorabilia, such as ribbons, photos, and other items from earlier days, at the upcoming Centennial Celebration, as well as in the window display being prepared at Historic Takoma, Inc. We promise to take good care of them.

If you have any of these things, and would be willing to lend them for a period of time in July and/or August, please contact Diane Svenonius at dbsvenonius@msn.com or 301 585-1566.

Some Dues & Membership News

Please welcome these new and returning members to our club: Susan Strasser, Kelly Dooran, Vanessa White, Valerie and Alan Cohen, and Liz Crafford. We hope you will "dig in" and check our website frequently. There is always something happening or about to happen!

The 2016 dues are coming in s l o w l y, but steadily! We are having a lot of "Centennial" expenses now and appreciate that our members continue to support the club and all our activities! Keep in mind that our Centennial Celebration on August 27 is for members and invited guests only. Don't miss out! We are creating a very special event! Please check with me (cagalati@rnc.com) if you don't know your membership status.

Thank You!

Centennial Donations reach \$1600! 40% of goal! Thanks to our generous contributors!

Oak

Jeff Trunzo
Carole Galati

Aster

Anonymous
Katherine Lambert
Joanne Douglass Meikle

Rhododendron

Taffy Turner
Loretta Neumann
Kathy Jentz
Diane Svenonius
Kit Gage
Anne Hardman
Melanie Isis
Anonymous

Sedum

Frank Malone
Cindy Walczak
Jane Godfrey

To make your donation, please mail your check to the Club treasurer, Taffy Turner, at 10207 Lorain Ave, Silver Spring 20901. Make checks out to THC.

100th Anniversary Program Activities Suggested Donor Levels:
\$ 25 Sedum
\$ 50 Aster
\$100 Rhododendron
\$250 Oak

One Hundred Years of THC

This is the seventh in a monthly series giving glimpses of the Takoma Horticultural Club at various times during its history, drawn from a collection of newsletters, reports, ledgers and other materials made available through the help of Diana Kohn and Historic Takoma Inc. This month we profile Margaret Lancaster, THC's first woman president (a timely election-year topic) and a significant figure in the evolution of garden clubs and federations.

The first woman to serve as president of the Club was Margaret Caldwell Lancaster, a garden planner and landscaper who was a vigorous and effective part of the Garden Club movement which appeared early in the 20th Century.¹ Miss Lancaster moved to Takoma Park in 1921, living on Harlan Street NW in the District until her death in 1970. Originally from New York and New Jersey, she had majored in Fine Arts at Syracuse University, and studied landscape design at Cornell and at the Ambler School.² Interviewed much later by a Takoma Park journalist,³ she spoke about the Club and the local garden club scene of that time.

"When I first joined [THC], it was composed mostly of men, many of whom were professionals in gardening, connected with the Department of Agriculture. Women were more or less endured as members... it was predominantly a man's organization. Of course, even though the men considered themselves the gardeners, I believe it was the women who did most of the actual work.

"You can imagine what a unique honor it was to become the first woman president in an organization like that....It was a thrill, too. Of course, I had to work my way up to the job...before becoming president I had served as chairman of almost every committee, assisted with practically every flower show we held, and reached the presidency step by step from landscape gardener [an elected club office], to treasurer, to secretary, to vice-president and then to the top job."⁴ She was elected President for the year 1926.

"The Club was one of the best-known garden clubs in the country because so many of our members who worked for the government in the fields of horticulture and agriculture...would be transferred to other locations and would start clubs in their new communities." Miss Lancaster began to work with garden clubs in Westchester County, N.Y. where she used to speak to gardening groups. After coming to Washington, she spent a great deal of time organizing new clubs in Maryland, Virginia, and the District: "the Chevy Chase-D.C. Garden Club, the Neighborhood Garden Club of Arlington... others in northern Virginia, and many women's club garden groups."

"While all the local interest [in gardening groups] was springing up in the early '30s, I called a meeting of clubs in the area and organized them into the National Capital Area Federation of Garden Clubs (NCAFGC), the fourth of its kind in the country....I also helped organize the Pennsylvania and Connecticut groups into state federations," she said. "There were just a few. Now the number of federations is well over 40." The next move was to band these into a national organization, a project that took about two years but culminated in "a wonderful three-day session here in Washington, and we organized the National Council of State Garden Club

Federations, now a powerful influence among gardeners in this country"

Other roles were Accredited Flower Show Judge (she organized a school for judges in the District Federation), National Council Landscape Appraiser, writer, speaker, and holder of several offices in the Council. She is credited with helping move the Council to undertake the Fern Valley Planting at the National Arboretum. She was also active in many plant societies.

Of the gardening scene of the time, she said "I believe the rising interest in gardening stems from the pride people are taking in the development of their home grounds. It is also good relaxation and whether they admit it or not, most people like to work with their hands [in a type of work different from what most do in their regular jobs]...and there is a feeling of competition present as everyone tries to raise more and better flowers." As a consultant, she specialized in 'average size gardens for the average family': "Although infinitely harder to plan than a large one, it presents a greater challenge in design, minimum of maintenance, with a maximum of beauty and all-year-round enjoyment."⁵

In 1984, fourteen years after her death, the Executive Board of the NCAFGC approved a fund to commemorate her work in promoting the NCAFGC and other federations of gardening groups, saying that her influence led the National Council to become part of "one of the great movements of the twentieth century in America."⁶

—Diane Svenonius

Notes

¹ The Philadelphia Garden Club was founded in 1904; in 1913 12 eastern clubs formed the Garden Club of America.

² Founded and underwritten by women in 1910 as the Pennsylvania School of Horticulture for Women, to provide women with "the practical education they needed to pursue careers in horticulture and landscape architecture," it eventually merged with Temple University.

³ "The Town... and the People," by Allen Scott, undated copy archived at Historic Takoma, Inc.

⁴ THC End-of-year meeting minutes, 1921 – 25, archived at Historic Takoma.

⁵ Memo dated October 8, 1984 to the "Takoma Horticultural Society" [sic] from Cleo V. Moosberger, Chair of the Memorial Fund committee of the National Capital Area Federation of Garden Clubs.

⁶ From "The Town... and the People" by Allan Scott.