



Takoma Horticultural Club

A hardy perennial since 1916



June 2016

For Your Summer Pleasure...

Open Gardens starting Friday, June 10th

Sponsored by the Takoma Horticultural Club and hosted by generous members, these events are free and open to the public. This year they are all held on Friday evenings between 5:30 and 7:30. Details and schedule can be found at www.takomahort.org and will be posted on our Yahoo Group list. Watch for updates, questionable weather alerts, directions and addresses as well.

These Open Gardens are great opportunities for all gardeners—novice to long-time, new and prospective club members, members of other garden clubs, friends and neighbors- to gather, socialize, network, and learn from and enjoy each other's passion—gardening. Following is a summary of our host gardens. Mark your calendars now!

—Carole Galati



The bottle tree in Wendy Bell's garden. Photo Wendy Bell.

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

June 10: Alison Gillespie: Alison gardens with a goal: to create a wildlife habitat. Her gardens attract butterflies, beetles, bees, birds, hummingbirds, dragonflies, and much more. Outside should feel like outside, and be a little wild and free. But some careful planning and a desire to create a visually pleasing space has yielded a mix of casual design, native plants, some edibles, and lots of plants for year-round interest. Her organic garden is chemical free, with the care of pollinators and beneficials a priority. She also has created spaces for the kids to play and explore and find respite. Let's be kids in Alison's garden on June 10! Signed copies of her book *Hives in the City* will be available for purchase.

June 17: Priscilla Labovitz: Over the years Priscilla has hosted many delicious events for the THC. But there is something new for us to enjoy! Priscilla recently purchased the lot on the left side of her very unique house and hired landscaper Carolyn Mullet to design a contemplative shade garden. The other gardens include graceful ornament grasses, perennials and a swath of woods including hydrangeas and other shade lovers. And then there's the very private special garden adjoining her property in the back. Come take a peek!

June 24: Monica Cretzu: If you want to see 17 (and counting) fruit trees, at least seven berry shrubs and fence-to-fence veggies in raised beds, then this is the garden for you! Did I say this is all in downtown Silver Spring on a rather small property?! Needless to say, it is intense. Five rain barrels and pollinator friendly plants make it all happen, along with Monica's determination and enthusiasm. She can't wait to show you!

July 8: Wendy Bell: (Note date change from July 1!) Where plants are concerned, Wendy believes the more the merrier. Her yard is a mix of woody trees and shrubs, perennials, grasses, bulbs, tropicals and vegetables. It is wild, colorful, and multi-textured. There's also a permeable paver driveway and a welcoming blue bottle tree. Her garden themes are four-season interest, plant diversity, and experimentation. Many of you enjoyed Wendy's garden on the Takoma Park House & Garden Tour last month. It will be a different show in July!

Announcements

See you at the Garden Party!

The sixth annual Garden Party will be held at Behnke Nurseries in Beltsville on Saturday, June 4 from 10 to 2:30. Please join us to support Friends of Brookside Gardens by buying raffle tickets for about 75 fabulous prizes, including (but not limited to) works of art, garden books, Kings Dominion Tickets, gift cards to local restaurants, garden services, and much, much more! Featured Raffle Prize: a children's table and 2 chairs, hand painted by nationally known decorative artist, Betsy Thomas.

Bring labeled plants for a Plant Swap at 10:00—it's bring one, take one! Also, bring a garden hat to decorate for the Hat Contest. Behnke's will supply floral materials and glue guns. Three Behnke gift cards for the best hats! Hear a great talk by Kerry Mandez at 11:00 and Five Minute Speed talks, 1:00 to 2:00. They'll be funny, fast and informative—we promise! If you get hungry there will be food for sale and a free Ice Cream Social at 12:30. Best of all, you don't have to be present at 2:00, when the Raffle Winners are announced! Bring those little address labels to put on all your raffle tickets. Sorry, you will have to write your phone number on each ticket!

Please check out the detailed schedule using this link: <http://goo.gl/U9DP5G>.

Hort's A-Marchin' on the Fourth of July

Here's a Casting Call for members and friends needed when the Takoma Horticultural Club marches in the Takoma Park Fourth of July Parade!

Last year we won a costume prize when we represented the Sixties and "Flower Power". This year we'll take on that decade plus the other nine!...with apparel from all 100 years of THC.

Be a Victory Gardener from the '40s, winning the war with carrots and kale; a disco gardener from the '70s with Elton John sunglasses and flaring pants; or a Depression gardener with patched overalls, a hoe and a tin cup. Wear a straw topper, a poodle skirt, a mini. The web abounds with ideas that are simple to carry out. We'll provide a sash with your decade on it and perhaps some other paraphernalia from our time capsule or nearby thrift shop.

Don't take it too seriously, there are no rules. Our Club's parade unit participants are invited to join us for a potluck picnic supper afterward at the home of Barbara Karpas in Takoma Park (details to follow). Sign up now for fun on the Fourth—contact Diane Svenonius at dbsvenonius@msn.com (301 585-1566) or Nancy Newton at n.newton@verizon.net.



Historic Parade photos: photographers and dates unidentified.



Let's Celebrate Our Centennial!

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. The 100th Anniversary Committee has been working diligently to plan many activities to mark this important occasion. To do all of this, we need to raise additional funds. We have just secured a small grant from the Takoma Foundation for a new corner park planting, and combined with member contributions so far, we are one-third of the way to our stated goal, but we still need your help to reach our target. 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.

100th Anniversary Program Activities Suggested Donor Levels:

\$ 25 Sedum

\$ 50 Aster

\$100 Rhododendron

\$250 Oak

Please hold the date of Saturday, August 27, 2016, for our special anniversary celebration event.

Thank You!

Centennial Donations reach \$1550! Nearly 40% of goal. Thanks to our generous contributors!

Oak

Jeff Trunzo
Carole Galati

Rhododendron

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

Aster

Anonymous
Katherine Lambert
Joanne Douglass Meikle

Sedum

Frank Malone



Anne Hardman MCing (left). Undaunted exchangers under the canopy. Photos: Kathy Jentz.

2016 Spring Plant Exchange

Considering the daylong drizzle, the annual Spring Plant Exchange on Sunday May 22 was an improbable success!

Enthusiasm undamped, 48 members and 1 dog assembled on the Heffner playground on Oswego Avenue to exchange surplus from their own gardens for new acquisitions from others', from winter jasmine to eggplant to tasty refreshments and well-used garden books. Rain remained light and the participants were well covered in their mackintoshes and bright boots, or stayed dry and waited for their turns under the canopy.

Anne Hardman served ably once more as mistress of ceremonies. The Club acquired three new members (welcome to Bob Hirshon, Deborah Goldberg and Sherelyn Ernst!), and several members renewed for the occasion. As cars drove off with their new foliage a little before 3, two more people arrived wanting to participate in the exchange, making 50 actual and potential participants.

Watch out for the Fall Plant Exchange, scheduled for Sunday, October 16, as gardeners work to tame summer's exuberance and get ready for fall.

Club's Centennial Observed

Proclamations. Club members gathered at the Takoma Park City Council meeting on May 18 to accept proclamations observing the Club's Centennial:

- from the City of Takoma Park, presented by Mayor Kate Stewart;
- from the State of Maryland, sponsored by the District 20 Legislative Team of Senator Jamie Raskin, Delegate Sheila Hixon, Delegate David Moon and Delegate Will Smith;
- from the Maryland State Assembly, presented by Delegate Will Smith; and
- from the the Maryland Department of Agriculture, presented by Delegate David Moon.

Thanks to Jeff Trunzo for organizing these tributes.

The Takoma Park City Newsletter published a front page story ("Bulbs and Bubbly, Anyone?" by Editor Apryl Motley) on the Club and its "ten decades of educating local gardeners while furthering its public gardening mission." You can read the story at <https://takomaparkmd.gov/news/newsletter/>

Takoma Foundation. Early in May, the Club received notification of a generous grant of \$1,000 from the Takoma Foundation toward the design and planting of a new "Centennial Garden" at the junction of Philadelphia Avenue and Piney Branch Road. Groundbreaking is expected in the Fall.



THC members receiving Proclamations from Will Smith, David Moon, and Kate Stewart. Photo: Kathy Jentz.

Dues News

Please welcome new and returning members for April and May: Marty Ittner, Jeane Bumpus, Larry Himelfarb, Suzanne Schwetz, Marie Celeste, Michelle Prosser, Pam Holland, Isabelle Johnson and Jane Godfrey. We hope you will join in and help us celebrate our Centennial Year—2016. Check out our website "Calendar of Events" for current Club news.

There are still more than 40 people who paid dues in 2015, but have not yet paid their 2016 dues! Please check with me if you are not sure of your membership status. Keep in mind that the Fall Plant Exchange and our potluck suppers are Members Only events, and that the Centennial Celebration in August is limited to members and guests.

—Carole (cagalati@rcn.com)

One Hundred Years of THC

This is installment six of 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. In this episode we ask, **"How and when did the Club's newsletters evolve, and who wrote these terrible jokes?"**

Over the club's first eight years, 1916 to 1923, four publications in booklet form were issued to all the homes (about 1,000) in the new Takoma Park development, which straddled Maryland and the District. One contained the Club's constitution and *raison d'être*; two had charts on when to plant vegetables. In 1918, the pamphlet said "It is realized that the existing (wartime) conditions will bring out many gardeners not familiar with the soil and other conditions peculiar to Takoma Park. To meet this condition, the Instruction Committee has been created. Men [with] several years' experience with the soil of this locality have been placed on this committee, one in each section of the Park."

The early "News Letters" were in theory the responsibility of the Instruction and Publicity Committees but "as no one was directly responsible, issuance was not regular but was intermittent."

In 1947, the new President of the Club, Mr. J. Wallace Talley, declared that the "News Letter" be so "in act as well as name." Members should inform the editor of "anything of outstanding interest in their gardens. Also if you have anything to sell or desire to buy, the News Letter will be a good medium of publicity." Questions of general interest could also be sent in.

Newsletters began to come out monthly and covered familiar topics: meeting announcements, gardening advice, requests for volunteers for the dozens of committees, welcome to new members. The most distinctive voice in the archival newsletter boxes is that of "Jake" Talley, who first appears on the masthead in the '50s, writing a chatty rambling collection of scientific observations, announcements, goofy (sometimes politically incorrect) jokes, and social notes. They run to several pages and usually end with a few lines of poetry. Some examples:

"CAREFUL WITH THAT POWER MOWER In 1963, says Science Newsletter, power lawn mowers took a toll of 50,000 toes and 18,000 fingers. That is a high price for being too lazy to use a hand mower. Your editor does NOT use a power mower. The boy next door cuts his lawn."

"Small child to mother: Do people come from dust? Yes. Do people return to dust? Yes, why do you ask? Well, there's somebody under our bed either coming or going."

"ABOUT THAT SEA BORN KELP touted to totally take away disease and bugs from the garden! Your editor is using it in his garden this spring, and while he does not know yet the reactions of the plants, he has noted an unpleasant reaction in the olfactory organs of man, that gives a clue as to why self-respecting bugs hunt other gardens. Don't be too optimistic, because some bugs either have no olfactory organs or they just don't give a hang."

"PLEASE, PLEASE pay your dues so your News Letter editor can cease this everlasting repetition."

"BATTLE OF THE SEXES: WSJ reports that men outdo and out purchase the ladies when it comes to gardening. Among the 40 million U.S. gardeners, men spend 7 to 8 times as much as ladies on their hobby and get more blue ribbons in shows. This item was collected by a Men's Garden Club, and of course our Club became coeducational in 1919 and would not glory in these facts even if they were true."

About 10 years later, Talley writes: "Your editor sometimes feels a bit frustrated by the ever-increasing restrictions on levity and humor in publications. We heartily agree with many of these... because every individual is one of God's loved children and should not be the object of ridicule...but it does cut off a fertile source of laugh inducers..." He renamed the News Letter the "Newsette" to reflect his idiosyncratic mixture of topics and styles.

Serving as President again in 1960, Talley is all business, at least in the minutes. The job required him to address a tight budget (\$353.71 on hand; \$2,000 in the bank), find new storage for flower show equipment (a garage at 912 Aspen Street), remedy the decreasing interest in flower shows (he instituted a "Bragging Session" at monthly meetings to encourage members to feel good about their flowers), and search out a new regular meeting place.

"Newsettes" also reflect the social character of the club. Many couples were members, and served on the large number of committees that kept things going. Newsletters frequently reported illnesses, conveyed get-well wishes, issued birthday congratulations and told who was vacationing where. A highlight of each year was a banquet with live music sometimes provided by the members, such as the "Solos and duets by Mr. and Mrs. Earle Toense" in 1951.

"Doris Gassman moving to Florida which makes us all sad. We all love Doris and can never forget what a loyal friend she was to Grace Richmond. May God bless you Doris and keep you happy." "Our wishes for a speedy recovery go also to our esteemed friend, Dr. Freeman Weiss, who was seriously injured by an intruder in his home." "The report is good on Walter Gannaway. He was taking pictures at the Rose Show on October 3rd." Obituaries were long and thorough.

Until finally this notice in 1976: "Wallace J. Talley [sic], colorful editor of the Newsette, died Saturday, September 18. Jake, as he was popularly known, was devoted to our club and carried the burden of editing the Newsette for 15 or more years. It will be difficult for his successor to equal Jake. His specialty in horticulture was chrysanthemums. He will be sorely missed."

Talley was also co-author of the 1970 publication "Now, Once and Again," which chronicles "the facts" in the Club's history—as set forth by co-author Arthur Hecht—and "other information that Talley experienced, heard or imagined." —Diane Svenonius