



The Hardy Plant Society

Mid-Atlantic Group

www.hardyplant.org

MID-ATLANTIC GROUP

Newsletter, January 2011

Vol. 25, No. 1

Member of the Year: Alicia Thomas-Glenn

by Kay Johns

*A*T THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND POTLUCK DINNER on November 13, 2010, Alicia Thomas-Glenn was recognized as HPS/MAG Member of the Year. Since 1995 the Board of Directors of the Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group has recognized members who have made an outstanding contribution to the organization.

Alicia exemplifies the spirit of HPS/MAG. In her position as the Ways and Means Chair, she performs her duties with enthusiasm and good spirit. Whether it is finding vendors, seeking out venues, or obtaining volunteers, it is always done with efficiency and attention to detail. Alicia cares about the Hardy Plant members and strives to present them with opportunities to



Alicia Thomas-Glenn

purchase both plant and non-plant items. Congratulations and thank you, Alicia!

Alicia has a long history of horticultural adventures, starting at the age of ten with an unsuccessful carrot-growing attempt. Her next love as a teenager and young woman was houseplants. After hiring a designer to plan her garden, she delved into the world of horticulture and began to garden with perennials, bulbs, and shrubs, which is what brought her to HPS/MAG. Alicia's love of gardening also took her to the Arboretum of the Barnes Foundation where she earned a certificate at the end of her three years. Again, thank you, Alicia, for all you do to help make The Hardy Plant Society the wonderful and diverse organization that it is.

March Into Spring XV

A Symposium for Gardeners

This year's **March Into Spring** will be held March 19 at **Delaware County Community College** in Media, PA.

See the enclosed MIS brochure and page 2 of this newsletter for more information.

Dates to Remember

For more information about the events listed below, see *Programs & Events and Special Interest Groups* on page 2, or log onto www.hardyplant.org.

January

- 23:** Sunday, 2:00 P.M. Joanne Walkovic Memorial Lecture, Chris Hansen, Swarthmore, PA
- 24:** Monday, 6:30 P.M. Board Meeting, Tredyffrin Library, Strafford, PA

February

- 6:** Sunday, 11:00 A.M. Winter Interest SIG, Acer Grafting Workshop, Green Mansions Nursery
- 28:** Monday, 6:30 P.M. Board Meeting, Tredyffrin Library, Strafford, PA

March

- 19:** Saturday, 8:30 A.M. March Into Spring XV, Media, PA
- 28:** Monday, 6:30 P.M. Board Meeting, Tredyffrin Library, Strafford, PA

April & Beyond

- Apr 18:** Board Meeting

Seed Exchange Workshops

Seed Exchange Workshops will be held on selected Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in January and February at the Henry Foundation, Gladwyne. Please see page 7 for more information.

Check www.hardyplant.org for Calendar updates and a photo gallery of events.

Seed Exchange Notes

by Gene Spurgeon, Seed Exchange Chair

*A*MONG THE SIXTY-PLUS DONORS who provide the 800-1,000 different seed selections each year for the exchange; the thirty or so volunteers who finish/clean, sort, package, and fill orders; and the small core group that manages the associated paperwork, there is one stand-out exchange participant. In the course of filling a number of different seed exchange jobs through most of the exchange history, she has quietly but diligently bridged the work of the donors and the processors.

Lorraine Wallace, most recently known as the Receiver/Recorder/Proofreader, is the person to whom we have all sent our donor forms and our donated seed. In order to manage all the information associated with that job, she initiated early on the use of a computer-generated database that, while continuously updated, continues to serve the exchange today. Lorraine helped develop the plant-coding system and has continued to work

Continued on page 7

The purpose of the Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group is to cultivate, foster, and promote interest and participation in horticulture.

Seed Exchange Orders

Your copy of the 2010-11 *Seed Catalog* was mailed in December. Orders are filled on a first-come, first-filled basis, so get your order in early. **Deadline is January 21!**

The Society's Page

Programs & Events

The Joanne Walkovic Memorial Lecture New Goosebump Plants for 2011 These newbies will give you chills!

Chris Hansen
Sunday, January 23, 2:00 P.M.
Scott Arboretum, Science Auditorium

Free and open to the public.

Join **Chris Hansen** for a fast-paced look at the most exciting new shrubs, perennials, and groundcovers for 2011. Meet a few of the people behind these new introductions, including Chris's own breeding program with giant 3½" bloom hellebores. What about a Lemon Pledge-scented groundcover hardy to zone 5? Also, more coneflower breakthroughs, first-ever hydrangea introductions, and buddlejas that only grow 15" tall. This sneak-preview of "newbies" in the garden world is sure to surprise and delight! All plants in the talk are hardy to zone 5 and should thrive in our Philadelphia region.

Following internships at the Missouri Botanical Gardens and Longwood Gardens, Chris became Director of Horticulture for Wayside Gardens for five years, then moved from South Carolina to Portland, OR and worked in Sales/Marketing/Product Development at Terra Nova Nurseries. In 2006, he teamed up with Mary Walters and launched their online mail-order plant business, www.GreatGardenPlants.com.

Cosponsored by HPS/MAG and The Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College.

2011 HPS/MAG Board

President Janice Thomas
Vice President Brenda Smyth
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Publications Chair Barbara Bricks
Ways and Means Alicia Thomas-Glenn
Members-at-Large:
(2011-2012) Paula Squitieri
(2011-2013) Lynn Betson

Volunteer for HPS Seed Exchange Workshops

Contact volunteer coordinator Polly Garnett at mkgpollywog@aol.com, 610-695-9135. In case of snow, call 610-527-0463 to verify that the workshop will still be held.

March Into Spring XV Surf & Turf: A Symposium for Gardeners

Saturday, March 19, 8:30 A.M.—3:00 P.M.
Large Auditorium, Room 2225
Delaware County Community College
Media, PA

Join us for vendors, book sales, silent auction, and speakers.

- ☉ **Michael Bowell**, "Showtime at the Shore";
- ☉ **Margery L. Daughtrey**, "Diseases of Herbaceous Perennials";
- ☉ **Dan Heims**, "A Few of My Favorite Things"; and
- ☉ **Roger Swain**, "Finding the Perfect Tool".

To register, see the enclosed MIS brochure or go to www.hardyplant.org to download a form.

HPS 2011 Budget

Capital & Reserve.....	\$94,698.00
Interest.....	\$ 300.00
Membership	19,000.00
Programs	17,250.00
Seed Exchange	3,100.00
Ways & Means	<u>29,000.00</u>
Total Inflow.....	\$68,650.00
Administration.....	\$ 5,175.00
Grants.....	3,000.00
Programs.....	12,975.00
Publications	20,400.00
Seed Exchange	6,500.00
Ways & Means Expenses.....	<u>20,600.00</u>
Total Outflow.....	\$68,650.00

HPS/MAG Bylaws Amendment

The bylaw amendment that

Article V.—Board of Directors

C. Members-at-Large

1. Members-at-Large shall have no specific duties to perform as defined by this position.

2. There shall be a minimum of two, and there may be a maximum of four, Members-at-Large.

3. The term of office for one Member-at-Large (or two Members-at-Large if there are 3 or more) shall begin on the January of even-numbered years, the term of office for the other Member-at-Large (or two Members-at-Large if there are 4) shall begin on the January of odd-numbered years. The Term of Office for all Members-at-Large shall be two years.

4. Members-at-Large may serve consecutive terms.

was passed at the 2010 Annual General Meeting.

Special Interest Groups

HPS/MAG membership includes being a member of all Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and all members are invited to participate in SIG events. Contact individual SIG leaders for more information, to RSVP for events listed in this newsletter, or to share ideas for future events. Directions to private gardens will be sent to registrants.

Shade Gardening

Contact Inta Krombolz at 610-647-2336 or ikrombolz@comcast.net.

Focus Delaware Valley

Visit HPS/MAG members' gardens in the Delaware Valley. Because garden visits may be impromptu, we ask that you send an e-mail to Janice Thomas, archiebelle@gmail.com; e-mails will be sent to notify registrants of upcoming garden visits.

Focus Lehigh Valley

Contact Amy Kunkel amykunkel@verizon.net.

Native Plant

Contact Beverly Fitts, beverlyfitts@verizon.net or 610-667-5468.

Tender Perennials

Contact Gerri Eunson, gerri@eunson.org, 610-459-8485, for information.

Winter Interest

Join us from 11:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M. on February 6 for a hands-on **Acer Grafting Workshop** from **Green Mansions Nursery** owners **Billy and Jacqui Schwartz**, maplemaker@msn.com.

You will learn the technique of making a barely discernible graft and will end up with your own grafted Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*) to take home. Green Mansions Nursery has a number of unusual dwarf maples, many from the Dick Wolf collection, as well as some of their own named cultivars. The workshop will be in a heated work area, so no need to worry about the weather outside. The number of participants is limited; cost is \$30. All necessary equipment will be provided. Contact Sue Slim to register, sslim760@comcast.net, 856-235-6246. Directions will be sent to registrants.

2011 Membership Directory

When you receive your membership renewal notice, return it as soon as possible so we can ensure your inclusion in the Directory. Also notify us of e-mail or other changes since the 2010 Directory, bcubed32@aol.com.

Cold-Hardy Camellias— Gardening on the Esoteric Edge

by Harriet Monshaw

AT A RECENT LECTURE, Allen Lacey, plantsman, author, and the guiding light of Linwood, NJ's new vest-pocket arboretum, mentioned having planted *Camellia oleifera* 'Lu Shan Snow'. I wish he had consulted me first, even though my knowledge of camellias is limited. I would have said, "Forget Lu Shan, try another white camellia"—more about Lu Shan later. A buzz sounded in my brain—time for an article on camellias so that others don't go astray.

Background

The genus was named by Linnaeus in honor of George Kamel (1661–1706), an Austrian Jesuit missionary to the Philippines and botanist. However, two German physicians working in Japan, Andreas Cleyer in the 1680s and Engelbert Kaempfer in the 1690s, were the first to describe the plant in their writings. The genus *Camellia* is in the tea (*C. sinensis*) family Theaceae and is native to southeastern Asia. North American genera in that family are *Franklinia*, *Gordonia*, and *Stewartia*.

Ornamental camellias have been cultivated for centuries in China and Japan. They were imported to England about 1740; United States, 1780; and France, 1820 (Camille... "she was never seen with any flowers but camellias," Dumas 1848). These countries began hybridizing—primarily using *C. japonica*. But, it was not until the 1960s that cold-hardy camellias

were seriously bred. The two most well known American hybridizers are Dr. William Ackerman of Ashton, MD, at the U.S. National Arboretum, and Dr. Clifford Parks of Chapel Hill, NC, at the University of NC.

There are fewer than 100 cold-hardy cultivars currently in the trade reliable in zone 6b (0° F). Most are hybridized using the following species: *C. japonica*, *C. oleifera*, *C. saluenensis*, and *C. sasanqua*. The cultivars *C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane' and *C. oleifera* 'Lu Shan Snow' are often one of a hybrid's parents. The former is the hardier of the two.



Camellia oleifera 'Lu Shan Snow'

Cold-hardy camellia cultivars are usually grouped into blooming periods: **fall-bloomers**, October-January; and **spring-bloomers**, March-May. (In February, plants and people wisely go on vacation.) I prefer the fall/winter blooming camellias. They bloom when most other shrubs are snoozing—besides I have enough going on in spring.

Characteristics

Most hybrids are upright, reaching 6'+. I've read there is a globose shape, but I haven't met any roly-poly ones yet. The plant resembles a large-leaf evergreen rhododendron but with narrower leaves and single flowers. The leaf is evergreen, leathery, and lustrous, ilex-like with partially serrulate margins, 2–3" long by 1–2" wide. The flowers are 2–4", fragile, shattering easily. Flower forms can be single, double, anemone, peony, rose form double, and formal double; it's a progression of converting stamens and/or the pistil into petaloids. I prefer the flower forms that have "effective" stamens—let the boys have their day. Flower colors are white, pink, and red. (Camille's preferred color was white except for five days of the month when they were red—nothing like alerting the customers to when the shop was closed.) The flowering is often so profuse that the shrub appears almost out of place in the early winter/early spring landscape.

Which brings me to the plant's roots. While the plant may resemble the rhododendron genus in culture, habit, and relative intolerance to dense root competition, it differs in that it develops a taproot. This might explain its ability to withstand some drought and heat better than rhododendrons. Moreover, camellias, thankfully, do not succumb as easily to the wilt/root rot

Esoteric Edge

photo © Harriet Monshaw

as the rhododendrons do in my present garden—nothing more unsettling than watching a slow death. Thus, camellias fit nicely into a suburban landscape that might not tolerate rhododendrons. To paraphrase Marie Antoinette, if you can't grow rhododendrons, grow camellias.

That's the good news. The bad news is—most blooms freeze, brown, and turn to mush at about 32° F. Some hybrids have immature buds that will remain closed at subfreezing temperatures, then open when the temperature moderates.

Culture

Camellias, though not related to rhododendrons, have a similar culture: moist, well-drained, acidic soil (pH 5.5–6.5), part sun (4 hours/understory), and well mulched.

Siting is important—nothing is easy. Before my first foray into camellias, I read the literature: N or NW preferred but shelter from drying cold winds; not S or W due to sun issues; not E if exposed to morning sun during a freeze—the sun on glossy leaves might produce a rapid change of temperature which could cause tissue damage. Perplexed, I followed the path of least resistance by placing my two new camellias in an available space—a NE nook about 4' from the house's brick wall. This site protected them from the S and W. They were protected from the north wind by a huge *Rhododendron* 'English Roseum'. I had to prune the rhododendron to squeeze them in.

When to plant is also critical. Charles Cresson of Swarthmore,



Camellia 'Autumn Spirit'

camellia aficionado and hybridizer, plants in late April but transplants before April 1. Randy Kobetich of Chester and Rehoboth Beach, American Camellia Society speaker and show judge, favors the day he plants his tomatoes. Both agree growth may be stunted if planted in the fall. Martine Cusden of Forest Farm Nursery says mid-spring planting is preferred because most camellias are shipped from the South and have already broken dormancy. If a frost occurs, the new growth might be destroyed. She continues, if planted in the fall, when many northern garden centers stock camellias, the broad-leaved evergreen hasn't



Camellia 'Ashton's Snow'

enough time to establish itself to endure the rigors of our winter. All agreed to *not* making a purchase until spring. If that's not possible, the new plant can be kept in a lighted, cool garage (45° F maximum) until ready to plant.

Practical experience

When I moved to a new home and garden five years ago, my two camellias moved, too. I placed them NE about 6' from a solid fence protecting them from the northwest wind next to an *Ilex aquifolium* 'Argenteomarginata' (Variegated Holly) in my white garden. *C.* 'Winter's Interlude' (*C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane' x *C. sinensis rosea* 'Pink Tea'), an Ackerman hybrid, pinky lavender, anemone (bloom time 11/15-12/31+) didn't survive the transplant—I moved and transplanted in December. *C.* 'Autumn Spirit' (*C. oleifera* x *C. sasanqua*), a Parks hybrid, bright deep pink, peony (10/15-12/15+), however didn't drop a leaf. Siting correct; landscaping incorrect. Every time I went out my front door in the fall, there was this bright magenta flowering shrub staring me in the face when the entire world

is orangey and gold. Talk about tender sensibilities. I banished her to the rear of my garden, east facing about 8' from the house. Despite my lack of attention, she continues to grow and flower profusely—she certainly has "spirit."

What to do? I wanted a white camellia near my variegated holly, white fruiting callicarpas, and white anemones. I planted *C. oleifera* 'Lu Shan Snow', white, single (11/1-1/15) and *C.* 'Ashton's Snow' (*C. japonica* 'Billie McCaskill' x *C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane'), an Ackerman hybrid, white, double (11/1-1/30). The single blooms of 'Lu Shan Snow' are a disappointment. The flowers viewed close-up look like silky

fluttering butterflies. From my front door, they look like wet tissues—worse, they turn brown at 32°. The flower buds appear incapable of blooming when the weather warms. Cresson however sees other things in his 35-year-old Lu Shan—an impressive, handsome, showy bark. Unfortunately, I don't have 35 years to wait and see what my plant will look like when she grows up. Sorry, Charlie. In contrast to Lu Shan's performance, the double flowers of 'Ashton's Snow' look respectable even at 30° degrees; moreover, the flower buds bloom after ameliorating weather. Despite Lu Shan's shortcomings, I may keep her for historical reasons.

Spring bloomers

A few words about spring bloomers—basically *C. japonica*. In my area, Camden County, NJ, one sees lanky, 8'+, floriferous plants that are about 20–25 years old. I can only assume that these old cultivars are truly hardy as they have survived years of neglect and the vagaries of our weather. Most are sited N or E, sheltered near walls and among other shrubbery. None are exposed specimen plants.



photo © Harriet Monshaw

Habit for Rose Form, Double Flower

Unfortunately, none of the people who presently own these shrubs know the cultivars' names. (Time for cuttings?) A little judicious pruning and a mild balanced fertilizer might go a long way to fattening them up.

To experiment with spring bloomers, I planted *C. x williamsii* 'Aida' (*C. japonica* 'Ville de Nantes' x *C. saluenensis* 'Dogrose'), pink, rose form, mid-spring, and *C. japonica* 'Longwood Centennial', red, single, mid-spring. Both were recommended by Matt Taylor, research horticulturist at Longwood Gardens' camellia breeding program. *Note:* The name Aida means "returning" in Arabic; not the doomed opera heroine.

So what and where to buy

For a camellia genus overview, start with Dirr's *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*; move on to Ackerman's article "Camellias for Cold Climates"; and finish with Ackerman's illuminating book, *Beyond the Camellia Belt: Breeding, Propagating and Growing Cold-Hardy Camellias*.

For fall/winter, I suggest 'Ashton's Snow' and 'Autumn Spirit'—even though she's a screamer, she has survived transplanting three times. Both Cresson and Kobetich recommend 'Winter's Star', pink, single (10/15–11/30), and globose 'Snow

Flurry', white, peony (10/15–11/30+). Cusden raves about semidwarf 'Winter's Rose', pale pink, formal double (11/1–12/15). For dependability, she likes 'Survivor', white, single (late fall/early winter), and 'Autumn Spirit'.

For spring bloom, Cresson rhapsodizes over 'April Remembered', pearly pink, large semidouble (3/1–4/30), and respects 'Spring's Promise' for its long blooming period, rosy pink, single (2/15–5/15). Kobetich prefers the more exuberant blooms of Parks' April series—in particular, 'April Dawn', pink/white variegation with a variety of color sports, formal double; 'April Kiss', rosy pink, formal double; and 'April Tryst', red, anemone. Just the names leave me breathless.

Cresson and Kobetich both suggested ultra hardy (zone 5b? with protection) 'Korean Fire', red, single (3/15–5/15), a PHS Gold Medal plant.

With all this new-found knowledge, I accidentally made my latest acquisition. While I was perusing pumpkins and chrysanthemums in a local garden center, I stumbled over compact 'Yuletide', red/conspicuous stamens, single, (11/1–1/30), and it fell into my shopping cart...now I need a "cool" garage. With this zone 7b cultivar, I might be over the edge.

Other selection tips:

- ☼ flowering in mid-spring or early fall is less susceptible to danger from frost damage
- ☼ darker blooms show less frost damage than paler colors
- ☼ plump is good when it comes to camellia plant form
- ☼ if landscaping, pay attention to blossom color and plant shape
- ☼ do your homework (Ah, gee.)

A big box store's garden center had healthy, good-sized camellias for sale at a reasonable price. When I researched these cultivars, I found that they were not cold hardy in zone 6b.

Where to buy is a little easier

Try Waterloo Gardens, Devon or Exton, PA; Rare Find Nursery, Jackson,

NJ—the plants can be visited when in bloom; or Fairweather Gardens, Greenwich, NJ—but you know how they are—no exceptions to their mail-order-only rule except for a few visiting days in spring. Further afield, try Camellia Forest Nursery, Chapel



photo © Harriet Monshaw

Flower for Rose Form, Double Flower

Hill, NC—very knowledgeable. This nursery was established by Dr. Parks and his wife Kai Mei; it is now owned and operated by their son David Parks and Kai Mei Parks. I bought my first two camellias at this nursery on a trip to North Carolina with HPS/MAG in May 2001—a trip that still holds the HPS/MAG buying binge record to this day. We had to hire a truck to bring back the goodies.

Wherever, whatever, try a camellia or three. You know...that Marie Antoinette had a good head on her shoulders.



Harriet Monshaw writes horticultural and historical articles for various venues. She credits the following organizations: Barnes Arboretum, Rutgers Coop Extension of Camden Co. (Master Gardener), Longwood Gardens (Certificate Program), State of NJ Internal and External Audit (Yikes!—where she learned the fine art of investigation). Her interest in camellias, she says, came just when she thought she was ready for the coniferization/ossification of her garden—to paraphrase Gershwin, camellias "walked right in and drove the [conifers] away."

Ed Note: For a full-color version of this article, go to the HPS/MAG website, www.hardyplant.org. View the Ackerman articles online at the American Camellia Society, *Cold Hardy Camellias*, www.camellias-acs.com/display.aspx?catid=3,9,23&pageid=713, and at The International Camellia Society, *Camellias for Cold Climates*, camellia-ics.org/_ics/ackerm1.htm.

Connecticut Trip

by Janice Thomas

JOIN US MONDAY, JULY 18 THROUGH WEDNESDAY, JULY 20 for this year's domestic trip to the rolling hills of Connecticut. We will be visiting several private gardens and two nurseries for shopping.

Here is a sneak peek into the private gardens we will be visiting on our trip.

The serpentine drive at **Linda Allard's** house in **Washington, CT** leaves you breathless as you reach your destination. The house, inspired by an Italian villa farmhouse, lays resplendent on a hilltop, comfortable in its surroundings of openness and sky—the perfect spot for playing with nature.

Hollister House owner **George Schoellkopf**—a classic garden in the English manner, with a loosely formal structure, informally planted in generous abundance, situated in the Litchfield hills of western Connecticut. George went to England one year, fell in love with the English gardens, and once home, recreated his own English garden. www.hollisterhousegarden.org

Brush Hill (Charlie & Barbara Robinson) includes a series of gardens on varied topography around an 18th-century Connecticut farmhouse and barn amidst old stone walls. The garden includes a rose walk featuring old roses and climbers, a fountain garden, herbaceous borders, and a terraced garden planted in hot colors leading up to a garden folly through an arch to a woodland walk with a series of cascading pools. Many colorful garden structures have been designed and built by Charles including inventive disguises for the irrigation system and deer fence. www.brushhillgardens.com

The Marsteds' Garden of Whimsy. Since 1969, has transformed a bland landscape into whimsical gardens. The "frog pond" with lilies and shade plants, the "hosta necklace" edging the woods, "Giverny" started with Monet's seeds, and the "secret garden", where vines climb the fence, preceded the swimming pool and pool house. A greenhouse with a living floor, sculptures, mirrors, and benches provide spots for contemplating and resting. Marcia is a photographer, check out her website; www.marciareedmarsted.com

Beverly Marciano—Tapestry in Shade. Like an intricate tapestry, Beverly's shade garden is filled with a colorful blend of tex-

tures, colors, and shade-loving perennials. Hostas are the foundation of the garden with rhododendron and azaleas serving as a backdrop. Each season, birds rapidly fill the many birdhouses and are cheerfully welcomed. In the few areas touched by sunshine, daylilies and peonies flourish!

Beaulieu-Lupacchino Gardens. The property includes a Georgian Revival-style house atop a hill overlooking a lake with a panoramic view. Antique European reproduction statuary is placed strategically and brick edging around all the beds heightens the formality. The garden also features serpentine beds, a water feature, and fieldstone walks. Raised beds on the north and west corners are supported by a stone retaining wall and create an expanse of shade-loving greenery with woodland perennials.

The Murray Gardens. The two-acre landscaped property is carved out of a woodland setting and punctuated by unusual and native trees. When you walk through the garden gate into the backyard, you will find shade plants built into the pool deck and a formal triangle garden with a boxwood border. Then walk down into the sunken Japanese-style garden over the footbridge, beneath which a series of small waterfalls runs from the little upper pond to the fish pond below.

Kate Emery & Steve Silk. This evolving, ambitious one-acre garden in the woods reflects a fascination with using colorful foliage for season-long interest. It also includes elements of both formal and informal design, which are enhanced by the owners' ongoing experiments with color. Many of the beds have been reworked in the past year to beef up their structure and to accommodate an increasing affinity for tropical plants and unusual annuals. Steve is a writer and garden designer.

Carol & Ted Platt. The gardens surrounding Rose Cottage, a classic reproduction 1700s Cape in Wallingford, CT, are traditional color-themed borders designed to complement the old-fashioned architecture of the house. In back, through a white picket fence, boxwood hedges and lattice fences divide the garden into rooms, each with its own distinctive feeling. A "Blue Arbor", smothered in roses, is just one of the many sitting areas from which to enjoy garden views and the many birds that inhabit the garden in the summer months.

Carol is a former contributing editor at *House & Garden* and is a freelance garden and lifestyle writer. She is a member of The Middletown Garden Club, The Connecticut Unit of the Herb Society of America, and is a Master Gardener.

Two nurseries will be on our itinerary.

O'Brien Nurserymen has grown into New England's premier hosta nursery, with extensive display gardens feature over 1,600 hosta varieties, as well as other shady characters including asarums, pulmonarias, epimediums, and arisaemas. The gardens also include a wide variety of unusual dwarf conifers and more than a hundred varieties of Japanese Maples. www.obrienhosta.com

Broken Arrow Nursery has strived to be one of the premier specialty nurseries of woody plants and perennials in the country. Display gardens feature plant material that is available for purchase. www.brokenarrownursery.com

The cost of the trip is \$380.00 for double occupancy (\$480.00 for single occupancy). Includes all transportation, hotel accommodations at The Farmington Inn, all breakfasts and lunches, a wine and cheese social the first night, and the bus driver's tip.

The registration form will up on the HPS/MAG website, www.hardyplant.org, at 8:00 A.M. on Monday, January 10. Registrations will be filled on a first-come basis. No early registration, no online registration. Questions: Contact Janice Thomas at archiebelle@gmail.com or 610-458-9794.

Stay informed. Subscribe to the HPS Upcoming Events e-mail by sending an e-mail request to info@hardyplant.org. Insert 'Upcoming Events' in the subject line.

Classified Ads

The HPS/MAG Newsletter accepts garden-related classified ads. The cost is \$3 per line (approximately 40 characters or spaces per line), with a minimum of \$20 per ad. For more information, contact Barbara Bricks, 610-388-0428, bcubed32@aol.com.

The newsletter is published bi-monthly, in Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept, and Nov. Copy deadlines are one month before the issue date: Dec 1 (for Jan), Feb 1 (for Mar), April 1 (for May), June 1 (for July), Aug 1 (for Sept), and Oct 1 (for Nov). HPS/MAG adheres to one-time use; all other rights are retained by the author.

We welcome all contributions. Contact Barbara Bricks, 32 Elmwood Dr, Kennett Square, PA 19348. 610-388-0428. bcubed32@aol.com.

The Gift

by Lois P. Sheinfeld

IT BEGAN LIFE ON THE SHADY SIDE OF THE HOUSE, this gift from Mother Nature, improbably nosing its way up through a path of dirt and gravel to reach the light.

Even as a seedling, I knew it was something special.

Growing straight and tall with no help from me (save supportive adoring looks and whispered sweet nothings), the object of my affection developed into an elegant tree, unlike any I had.

Yet, that's not entirely true. The lovely tiered branching was similar to a nearby dogwood and the foliage was almost identical to a white-barked weeping birch which succumbed to disease years before.

A romantic dalliance between a dogwood and a birch? No, I don't think

so. Besides, no way their progeny could possess the tree's resplendent mahogany-red, Black Cherry-like bark.

Actually, the richly painted bark was a dead giveaway, but I didn't get it until a tree guru came to visit. He took one look, broke off a twig, handed it to me and said: "Smell this." Ah, hah! Unmistakable. The delicious, heady aroma of wintergreen. I should have known.

My treasure, *Betula lenta*, commonly called Sweet Birch or Cherry Birch—in apt tribute to its unique aroma and bark—is native to the US and for years was the primary source of the extract oil of wintergreen, used to flavor medicine and candy.

Author Donald Peattie informs us that the sap was also the essential ingredient

of Birch Beer; and in his noted work, *A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America*, he shares an old-time recipe:

Tap the tree, as the Sugar Maple is tapped, in spring when the sap is rising and the buds are just swelling; jug the sap and throw in a handful of shelled corn, and natural fermentation—so the mountaineers tell us—will finish the job for you.

If you try this brew and it doesn't "finish" you off as well, let me know how you like it. I know you will like *Betula lenta*.

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Call for Baked Items

We invite you to bring baked items for the reception that follows the **Joanne Walkovic Memorial Lecture** on January 23. For planning purposes, please contact Tracy Constantine, tracy@constantine.name, 610-770-1075.

Attention Horticultural Business Owners

To donate plants and garden-related items for our popular silent auctions at March into Spring and the Spring Plant Sale, contact Alicia Thomas-Glenn, thoglo@comcast.net, 856-582-5580.

HPS Grant Applications

We are looking for individuals, community groups, schools, or organizations that are doing something to make our world a little greener in the horticulture area.

If you know an individual or group who you think deserves a little monetary help in their efforts, we would love to hear from you. It could be a class planting a butterfly garden, a student pursuing a horticultural career, or removal of invasive plant species project in parks or other public areas.

To make a nomination, contact Brenda Smyth, HPS Grant Chair, bsmyth19061@yahoo.com, 610-558-2692, or visit www.hardyplant.org for a grant form.

Deadline for scholarship application submission is **January 15, 2011**.

Seed Exchange Notes

Continued from page 1

with Kay Johns to keep the master list current. Her exchange work has required immense concentration and the use of an impressive intellectual capacity. She is a wonderful friend of the exchange and has become a personal friend of those who have worked with her.

She has asked for a well-deserved rest. We wish her well and look forward to her new contributions to the organization in the coming years.

During the last several months, **Lynn Cherry**, who will take over this position next year, has worked closely with Lorraine to ensure a seamless transition. We look forward to having Lynn in the core group that has made the exchange the smooth running operation that it has historically been.

The 2010-11 Seed Exchange Catalog was mailed on December 30. For the last several years, we have managed to complete the mailing before Christmas. With a later ripening cycle, as was the case again this year, it is becoming harder to accurately identify what seed will be available. This has impacted all our contributors.

Please bear with us in having a shorter window between receipt of the catalog and the deadline for placing orders. We will hold to the published schedule this year. In the future, we may consider moving the order deadline to a slightly later date. That will impact other activity dates with other implications. The choices are leaving the order

processing due dates in their current pattern with a shorter order window or alternatively providing a more generous window with later processing dates. If you have a strong opinion either way, please add a note to your order regarding your preference.

Several members have inquired about a seed propagation workshop for this year. We are not scheduling a separate one but rather will have a brief informal discussion and hands-on caucus with materials ready at every workshop for people who have trepidations and just need to get their hands a little dirty before they jump in.

Seed Exchange Calendar

Jan 21 Order Deadline

Jan 11, 12, 13

Jan 18, 19, 20 Checking/cleaning workshops

Jan 25, 26, 27

Feb 1, 2, 3 Packaging/distribution workshops

All workshops are held at:

The Henry Foundation
801 Stony Lane, Gladwyne, PA

10:00 A.M.—2:30 P.M.

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays

Contact volunteer coordinator Polly Garnett, mkgpollywog@aol.com or 610-695-9135.

In case of snow, call 610-527-0463.

A New President Takes the Gavel

President's Message *by Janice Thomas*

*A*S ANOTHER GARDENING SEASON COMES TO AN END, so does another President's term. I would like to personally thank **Kay Johns** for all the time she gave HPS/MAG as President. It wasn't always easy for her with a nursery business to run and all the trips up the turnpike extension on her own late at night. A thank-you should also go out to her husband **Herb**, who would arrive very early to set up for March into Spring lecture, or just fill in for Kay when she couldn't get away from the nursery.

Usually the President's term is for two years only, but Kay agreed to take an extra year so we could get our new Board in place. The Board welcomes two new members: **Marcia Bittner** as Treasurer and **Lynn Betson** as Member-

at-Large. I look forward to working with this year's Board; our goal is to make HPS/MAG the best it can be.

Since we don't hold a monthly meeting, it may be hard to get your ideas to us. I encourage anyone with ideas or suggestions to email me, archiebelle@gmail.com; as a board we will see what we can do to address members' input. Members also are invited to attend our Board meetings; just tell us if you are coming so we can make room for you. Check your newsletter for the date of upcoming Board meetings.

Just a quick introduction for those of you who don't know me. We have been in Chester County for the past seven years; it's here that I seriously got into gardening, thanks largely to the

Hardy Plant Society. Before moving to PA, I was a volunteer member of a first aid squad in New Jersey. Some of you will know me from the domestic garden trips (I encourage you all to sign up quickly for the trip to Western Connecticut trip as it should fill up fast). I was Treasurer of HPS/MAG for two years. I also volunteer at Longwood Gardens and at Paoli Hospital.

I look forward to meeting all of you over the next couple of years—at lectures, working with the seed exchange program, on a local garden tour, or on one of our overnight garden trips. We all have joined HPS/MAG for a reason and I encourage everyone to get involved and meet your fellow gardeners at an upcoming HPS/MAG event.

Directions to Delaware County Community College: 901 South Media Line Road, Media, PA 19063

From I-476 (Blue Route), take exit 9, Newtown Square/Upper Darby, and follow Rte 3 West (West Chester Pk) toward Newtown Square. Pass Rte 320 and turn left at the third light, Media Line Rd. Continue two miles to the college entrance on left.

From I-95 North or South, take I-476 exit, Chester/Plymouth Meeting, and follow I-476 to exit 5 (Rte 1, Lima/Springfield). Turn left on Rte 1 South toward Lima and continue to the Media/Rte 252 exit. Turn right onto Rte 252, cross Springton Reservoir, and turn right at the next light, at the sign for the college.

From West Chester, take Rte 3 East to Rte 252 South. Turn right on Rte 252. Go to the third light, Media Line Rd, and turn left. The college entrance is on the right.

Directions to The Henry Foundation: 801 Stony Lane, Gladwyne, PA 19035

From I-476 (Blue Route), take Exit 16A, Philadelphia/Valley Forge, and follow the signs for Conshohocken. Take Rte 23 East, which becomes Conshohocken State Rd. After the light at Spring Mill Rd, the next intersection is Lafayette Ave. Henry Ln (marked with a small sign) is the third left after Lafayette Ave. (If you reach the light at Waverly Rd, you've gone too far.) Follow Henry Ln (almost a dirt road) and turn left onto Story Ln, proceed to the end of the road. **Directions to Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting House,** 4116 Bath Pike (Rte 512), Bethlehem, PA, 18017:

Take the Rte 512 exit from Rte 22; go north for less than a mile. The Meeting House is on the right.

Directions to Swarthmore College, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore, PA 19081:

From I-476 (Blue Route), take Exit 3. Follow signs to Swarthmore on Baltimore Pike. In less than a mile, turn right on Rte 320 South. Then follow Rte 320 as it turns right at the first light. Turn right at the next light onto College Ave. Follow Scott Arboretum Event signs to parking. Follow signs to the Science Center, Room 101.

MID-ATLANTIC GROUP



Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group
Eve Thyrum
19 Crestfield Rd
Wilmington, DE 19810

Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group