

HPS TRIP TO HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT – JULY 2019

by Dawn Freeman

HPS members traveled to the Hartford, Connecticut area for a four-day whirlwind tour of nine private and two public gardens, and two local nurseries (John O'Brien's and Broken Arrow Nursery). Once again, Janice Thomas, the HPS trip chair, laid the foundation for our wonderful adventure. Read and enjoy some of our favorite garden highlights.

Stonecrop Public Gardens in Cold Springs, New York – Originally, the private home and gardens of Garden Conservancy founder Frank Cabot and his wife Anne, it opened to the public in 1992. The gardens cover 15 acres of “beautiful natural landscape.” The very diverse displays include: an alpine plant collection, many in “marvelous natural tufa” containers; an extensive cliff rock garden; woodland and water gardens.



Bunny William's Estate – The 15-acre country estate of Bunny William, a New York interior designer and garden book author, is comprised of many distinct garden spaces. There are colorful perennials bordering a koi pond, a large parterre with delightful foliage combinations, a woodland garden with a pond and waterfall, a Greek Revival temple-style pool house overlooking the landscape; and many greenhouses holding unusual specimen plants. An “incredibly beautiful but not a typical homeowner's garden; a true design dream.”

Lynn Beaulieu and Gerry Lupacchino's Garden – Over 20 years, Lynn and Gerry have filled their property with warm and welcoming gardens. The house's front door is adorned with magnificent Dutchman's Pipe and a seasonally decorated transom. Colorful gardens show a “wonderful use of annuals,” both in cleverly placed containers and among perennial flower beds. Whimsical statues and sculptures surprised all as we enjoyed the sound of water throughout the gardens. Some found this to be “the best” and “my favorite garden.”



Bob and Lynn Murray's Garden – This two-acre wooded property has become a colorful retreat with “beautiful stonework.” We were greeted by water flowing over a weeping copper sculpture and an array of fanciful frogs including a “giant frog sculpture.” Key highlights: long, colorful, sunny perennial borders; a beautiful stone walkway through a naturalized woodland setting, leading to a secret seating area overlooking a dramatic sculpture; and a stone bridge leading to a sunken shade garden, waterfall and pond with a bench and a friendly six-foot frog.



Elizabeth Park Public Rose Garden – Opened in 1904, it is now the third largest rose garden in the country with 475 beds and 8 grass pathways showcasing over 15,000 rose bushes and 800 varieties of old and new roses. Stephen Scanniello, aka “the rock star of roses.” led our tour. Rambler rose-covered arches, radiating from a large Virginia creeper-covered gazebo are a signature feature. While “peaceful and wonderful,” it was a “very hot day” so many of us found relief in the nicely shaded gazebo or with an ice cream by the lake, or both!

George Jones and Dean Delgivoire's Plantsville Pines – In 2002, George and Dean began transforming three acres of a former asparagus farm. Today, the mixed conifer border consists of “outstanding conifers providing a wonderful backdrop” to the gardens. A large boxwood parterre with matching multi-tiered fountains highlights unique foliage combinations and colorful containers. The cottage gardens display “amazing and colorful perennial beds” with “wonderful sedums, vibrant phloxes and exquisite lilies.”



Ed and Pat Traver's Garden – Beginning in 1999, this one-acre property has been transformed into a spectacular garden based on Pat's passion for shade-loving perennials and Ed's passions for hostas and conifers. Today, their garden has 1900 hostas on the property representing 1400 varieties!! "Ed's passion for hostas is contagious" and, impressively, "most of the hostas had nametags."



Carol and Ted Platt's Garden – Their "charming house" is named Rose Cottage and the garden theme is an old-style cottage garden. The color-themed borders are filled with richly fragrant plants. It is a "gardener's garden," filled with "beautiful roses" and charming handmade decorative items. Garden seating is plentiful, just perfect for enjoying the views.

Monique Anthony's Plum Gate Garden – What started as a cow pasture 25 years ago, is now an inspiring collector's garden full of unusual flora and whimsical objects. Entrance to the garden is via a plum-colored garden gate, and each "colorful garden bed area and border seems to have a special color palette." "Colorful containers of annuals" and "wonderful seating areas" are scattered throughout. These gardens were "friendly and relatable."



George Schoellkopf's Hollister House Garden

– Gardens created on 25 acres of rolling hills surrounding the 18th century farmhouse buildings are now permanently preserved for the public. Gently winding walkways connect terraced gardens that are “a delight for all the senses.” Stacked stone walls and tall hedges frame garden rooms filled with delightful water features and “a lovely variety of plants.” We enjoyed “wonderful views” while strolling the gently sloping countryside.



Barbara Paul Robinson and Charles Raskob

Robinson's Brush Hill Gardens – Artist Charles sculpted the land and built garden structures to create the canvases for Barbara to paint with her palette of plants. Paths through the green rolling hills of this 40⁺-acre property connect the lush gardens. Fourteen cascading pools carved by Charlie out of dry woodland provide an enchanting “woodland waterpark walk.” A cleared gravel quarry is now a large pond with a turquoise foot bridge. We enjoyed “rolling landscape views” from the terraces, stone walls and seating areas surrounding the 1750's clapboard farmhouse.