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The Newsletter

Spring 2013

Volume 31, Number 2

Dear Anne

Spring is here, and of course that means that the Plant and Book sale cannot be far away. Read about the sale and much else in this issue of our Newsletter. We hope to see you at the Sale!

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THE LANDIS ARBORETUM
NEWSLETTER is published
quarterly. The Arboretum's
mission is to foster the
appreciation of trees and other
plants and their importance in
our environment.

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The Arboretum is located at
174 Lape Road, Esperance,
NY. It is one and one-half
miles north of Route 20 in
Esperance. Follow the signs
from the village to Lape Road.
The Arboretum is one-quarter
mile straight ahead. Visit our
website for more information
and detailed directions.
Click [here](#) for an interactive



May 18 & 19, 2013, Saturday & Sunday, 10-4pm

OUT-OF-THE-ORDINARY
TREES **SHRUBS**
PERENNIALS

FREE admission & parking 10% member discounts
Great Oak keepsakes & Watercolors for sale.



Go Native: Spring Plant Sale Highlights

- Fred Breglia,
Executive Director

This year marks the 41st annual
Spring Plant Sale at the George Landis Arboretum. Our
founder, Fred Lape, began holding plant sales in the
early 1950s to raise money. Today, the spring and fall
plant sales are our biggest source of funding.

This year's theme is "New York State Native Plants."
There are many reasons why native plants are a
gardener's natural choice for planting. They are adapted
to our soils and climate and are typically deer resistant
and drought tolerant. With many species of birds and

map.

animals depending on plants for survival, natives have fewer nutritional deficiencies compared to non-native plants, or "exotics." Wildlife, such as hummingbirds and butterflies, are attracted to natives, thus adding another element of enjoyment to the garden.

A preview of our offerings: a wide variety of area native trees ranging from beautiful sugar maples to native oaks, sassafras, and black gums; to shrubs such as the native pinksters; and to such perennial favorites as the American bellflower, purple Joe Pye weed and the wild blue phlox.

All these plants are sure to flourish in an Upstate New York site. In addition to the large selection of natives, we will have an assortment of other plants suited to our hardiness zone, including a number of Landis grown plants. Did you know that many of the perennials that we divide, grow, and make available for sale come from our historic Van Loveland Perennial Garden? They were planted by the garden's founder Levan Loveland in the 1950s, so you not only purchase a plant, but a piece of history as well. A few examples of these include the red leaf rose, Harrison's yellow rose, and false aster, as well as the extremely beautiful and very hardy Betty Corning clematis. Of course, we will be featuring many favorites such as the dawn redwood, bottlebrush buckeye, paperbark maple, and dwarf conifers, as well as an extensive assortment of perennials. We are pleased that all of our favorite plant suppliers will be back at this year's sale.

But there's more than plants at our event. The very popular Book Sale will take place both days with one of the largest used gardening and nature-related book collection in the area. Our favorite bakers will be there with their homemade cookies, cakes, pies, and beverages. And don't just come to look and buy. Take the time to walk our trails, check out the renovated Meeting House, and enjoy all the Arboretum has to offer.

The Hills are LIVE at LANDIS

- Louise Polli

Come spring, there will be a new destination for arts and entertainment: the George Landis Arboretum.

The Arboretum will host a live music series on five Friday nights between May and September for you to enjoy with friends or family. This series kicks off on May 31 at the newly renovated Meeting House. The performances will be held either inside or on the deck, depending on the weather.

The Arboretum has established an Arts and Entertainment Committee, chaired by artist and music lover Samuel E. Bates. You may have met Sam when some of his sculptures were featured on the Arboretum grounds a few years ago; his works - paintings and sculptures - are also displayed in his home and studio in Duaneburg. He is well known locally as a mentor to upcoming musicians who seek new performance venues and audiences. Sam has successfully introduced and promoted many musicians in the area.

This year's music program will include a concert on the last Friday of each month, June through the end of September, beginning at 7 pm. Sam is impressed with the caliber of these local performers, and his expertise with lighting and sound systems will certainly enhance their performances. Scheduled acts include: John Scarpulla with Brian Shafer; Molly Durnin; Everest Rising; Annette Harris with Azzaam Hameed; and our own Fred Breglia with Hard Cider. Musical genres run the gamut from bluegrass to folk, blues, jazz, and rock. Updated information will be provided on our website, Facebook, and Twitter, and in Constant Contact emails. The Arboretum will announce each concert with links to the performers' websites, so concertgoers can get a taste of their work.

Renovations continue on the Meeting House. The area below the building serves as a natural amphitheater. Eventually the hill will be terraced and a modular stage erected. The indoor space might screen movies as well as host live acts. Juried art shows featuring fine arts and designer crafts might share the space and further expand the arts and entertainment opportunities that the committee plans to bring to Landis.

The renovated Meeting House will accommodate the Arboretum's educational programs as well as events such as weddings and other celebrations. Board President Jim Paley and Executive Director Fred Breglia envision a gathering place for the community. More than a meeting house, it will evolve into a three-season community/ environmental education/music and arts center. Stay tuned as more details become available about the NEW Meeting House, including a gala opening party anticipated for this summer.

And save those Friday nights-and a picnic basket - for LIVE AT LANDIS, coming soon!

You won't be disappointed.

Click [here](#) to view the LIVE at LANDIS poster!

Landis on WAMC

Once again, Fred Breglia will be a featured participant on the Vox Pop garden day panel. All days are Thursdays except in September, when the show will be aired on Wednesday. Tune in at 2 pm or check out the archived shows at WAMC.org.

May 30,
June 27,
July, 25,
August 29,
September 18, and
October 31

From the Director's Desk

- Fred Breglia



New Directions, New Trail, at Landis

A new hiking trail at Landis Arboretum is currently in its formative stages, and we hope to open it to the public in the summer of 2014. Beginning at the farthest point of the Ancient Forest Trail, it will be one of our longest and perhaps most scenic trails. Its proposed route would extend into even more of the Arboretum's old growth forest and pass by a giant bitternut hickory tree. From there it will follow a creek up the mountain, passing by numerous small waterfalls and several other picturesque natural views.

The proposed route will lead hikers all the way to the Charlton State Forest. Discussion with the Department of Environmental Conservation has begun with the intention of linking our trail to over 20 miles of existing State land trails.

I have finished flagging the route. Volunteers with a willingness to do trail work, especially those skilled in chain saw operation, are needed and will be much appreciated. If you are interested, contact me at the Arboretum by calling 518-875-6935, or by email at fred@landisarboretum.org.

The Forget-Me-Not

- Diane Y. Santus, Arboretum Volunteer

The forget-me-not is one of more than 50 species of the genus *Mysosotis*, family *Boraginaceae*. It sports clusters of blue flowers and is native to temperate Europe, Asia, and North America.

I'll admit it. For the past ten years, I have been hooked-addicted to researching the genealogy of my family, among whom were shipping captains, lawyers, doctors,



Indian translators, music publishers jewelers, and Revolutionary War heroes. My father was a Mason and, knowing very little about this organization, I discovered that the forget-me-not was a Masonic emblem.

In the years between World War I and World War II, the forget-me-not was adopted as a symbol by charitable organizations in Germany to encourage people to remember the poor and the destitute. As early as 1934, soon after Hitler's rise to power, it was apparent that Freemasonry was in danger. Realizing the imminent dangers facing them, the German Masons decided to wear a little blue flower lapel pin. They wanted a secret sign of membership, but one that was readily recognized by fellow

Masons. The forget-me-not, a small delicate five-petaled flower, became the symbol of Freemasonry in Nazi Germany. The fears of the Masons were well founded. Hitler made membership in the Masonic fraternity a crime and regarded Freemasonry as part of "the Jewish conspiracy." It is estimated that between 80,000 and 200,000 Freemasons were killed by the Nazi regime.

In 1947, the German Grand Lodge of the Sun was reopened at Bayreuth, and the little blue pin was adopted as the official emblem of the first annual convention of those Masons who survived the dark years of the war. The pin is now worn by Masons all over the world as a tribute to those Masons who were persecuted during the Nazi era.

True blue flowers are rare in the botanical world, but *Myosotis sylvatica* is common. (Its formal name is derived from the Latin words for "mouse," "ear," and "of the woods.") It is a short-lived perennial or biennial that prefers cool weather, moist soil, and shaded areas, although it readily adapts to most conditions. It can be used to good effect in rock or woodland gardens or planted en masse in naturalistic settings. Some gardeners might dismiss the flower as weedy and invasive, but the sight of an expanse of sky blue flowers in a lawn or in one of Landis' meadows in the late spring is one that you won't forget. This little wildflower is true to its name.

The Sex Life of a Fern

---Anne Donnelly

Surprised?

Many think of sex only in relation to humans - or animals we see on the TV.

In reality, it is the plants who "invented" sex, and it proved to be such a good idea that sex has been adopted by almost all living things.

Sex is the way most species "mix up" the chromosomes of the parents. The chromosome number is different for (but characteristic of) each species and is referred to as N (=Number). Sex cells, sperm and eggs, are gametes and have one set of chromosomes (N), which is a random mix of chromosomes and therefore characteristics of both the organisms' parents. Fertilization, in all its wondrous and bizarre forms, unites sperm and egg. All body cells are descended directly from the single fertilized egg ($2N$). So sex introduces diversity, and diversity is the propeller of evolution.

The fern has a life cycle that contains plants that have both N and $2N$ chromosome make-up. Let's start with the fern frond, which is $2N$. It is the dominant part of the fern life cycle and is the sporophyte, or spore-producing plant. Dust-like spores are usually located in dots on the underside of the frond. Each spore has only one set of chromosomes (N).



"Well, sort. In my day, decent plants had sex outside their bodies. Nowadays, they have 'flowers' and make 'fruits', no wonder the planet is a mess."

Readily distributed by the wind, spores are broadcast widely, and a few settle on a moist habitat suitable for germination into a plant completely different from the parent called the gametophyte (gamete producing plant). You wouldn't recognize it as a fern! The gametophyte or prothallus is a heart-shaped little scrap of green, less than $\frac{1}{4}$ the size of your little fingernail and is $1N$. If the time is right, a good hand lens can be used to discern both male and female sex organs on the underside of this miniscule plant. The female (producing egg cells) is located at the notch of the heart and the male at the tip. The sperm are strange multi-tailed cells that swim towards the awaiting egg. The sperm may come from the same gametophyte, or from another nearby. One drop of water is sufficient for this to happen - such is the scale of the "mating". Upon union, and with suitable conditions, the fertilized egg or zygote ($2N$) starts to grow into a new generation of ferns.

Ferns arose over 400 million years ago as the first of the vascular plants - those having true roots and vascular tissue (stems with xylem and phloem). Ferns and other seedless plants (lycophods) were dominant through the Carboniferous period when the

major land mass was close to the equator. These thick tropical swamp forests died, fell to the ground in the stagnant acidic wetlands, and turned into thick deposits of peat, which were covered, compressed, heated, and converted to coal, oil and natural gas (fossil fuels) over millions of years. Seed bearing plants came later.

World climate turned colder and drier as continents shifted, providing an opportunity for the seed plants. Because they can complete their life cycles on dry land and withstand cold better, seed plants now account for 90% of existing species.

Intrigued?

Join Master Gardener Cindy King on July 13, 10 am to noon at the Greenhouse to explore Growing Ferns.

Members: \$10, non-members: \$20.
Call [518-875-6935](tel:518-875-6935) to register.

LANDIS PORTRAITS:

A series about the people behind the plants at the Arboretum
- Nolan Marciniac



Both Anne and Pat Donnelly remembered taking their children to the Arboretum for a performance by the Mettawee Theater. Although it was more than forty years ago, their kids still remember how awed they were by the huge puppets - and Anne and Pat have been fans of the Arboretum ever since.

When Anne retired from her position teaching biology at SUNY Cobleskill in 2006, she vowed that she would not attend another meeting for at least a year. But that September, her friend and colleague Barbara Brabetz asked her to join the Landis Board in January. In March, Anne became chair of the Education Committee; in May, chair of the Communications Committee. Two years later, she was elected president of the Board of Trustee - and then, as circumstances would have it, acting director. Although Anne admitted that these years of many meetings were some of the most stressful in her life, they were for a cause she really believed in. Anne currently serves as the Arboretum's volunteer coordinator.

Pat's "official" introduction to the Arboretum came when he was working for the State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation. The detectives had received a tip that burglars might raid the Lape home for antiques while Lape was wintering in Mexico. Pat and other officers waited upstairs in the unheated farmhouse, heard the thieves break into the downstairs rooms and amass a collection of valuable furniture to load into their trucks-and then arrested them.

Despite those difficult years at the helm of the Arboretum, retirement has given Anne the opportunity to botanize with "plant geeks" in Mexico, to raft down the Grand Canyon, and to study flora and fauna in Costa Rica. She and Pat do a lot of traveling in the US. Both boys are in Alaska-their daughter in nearby Glenville-and Anne has seven siblings, each of whom lives in a different state.

Although Pat was brought up in the Bronx, he is most at home in the outdoors. He takes pride in managing the 16 acres of woodland on their property-"culling, nurturing, and designing," he said. He pointed out that their woodlot includes a "champion" white birch, perhaps the largest specimen in New York State. Pat also works on the Arboretum's Building and Grounds Committee.

Both are anticipating celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. Anne was an undergraduate at SUNY Oneonta and working in a bar, where she met Pat, a "dashing young" state trooper. They bought a "ramshackle" old farmhouse on 100 acres in Lawyerville in 1968 and have spent thirty years restoring it.

Even after spending most of her life in education, Anne said that she is still learning from the people she's met at the Arboretum. The Arboretum's bog garden continues to fascinate her: it affords an opportunity for an eye-level view of such specimens as the pitcher plant, tiny orchids, and mosses.

Both Anne and Pat encourage people to volunteer at the Arboretum. "No matter what mood you come in, you'll be in a better mood when you leave," Anne said. Pat added, "No matter what you do, you know it'll be appreciated." Both are optimistic about the future of the Arboretum and expressed confidence in Fred Breglia, the Arboretum's recently appointed executive director. Both trust that another, younger generation will follow Fred's lead and recognize the Arboretum for the treasure it is.

The Mettawee Theater returns to the Arboretum this summer! It once brought Pat and Anne Donnelly to the Arboretum

And they stayed.

Beekman Quilt to be Auctioned

- Wilma Jozwiak

When Landis member Anne Donnelly entered a raffle at a fundraiser for the Schoharie

County Food Pantry and the Butterfly Café soup kitchen, she little expected to win anything. She was wrong.

She became the recipient of a gorgeous 72 x 90 inch quilt depicting the Beekman 1802 Farm in Sharon Springs. It was created, hand-stitched, and embroidered by Farmer John's mom and his sister Shirley. Anne took the quilt to the Beekman 1802 store and had it autographed by the Beekman Boys themselves, not realizing that their fame would soon grow exponentially after they won "The Amazing Race" TV reality series.



Fabric Detail.

A longtime supporter of the Arboretum, Anne decided to turn her good fortune to the Arboretum by allowing us to auction the quilt, thereby benefiting Schoharie County twice!

We will open bidding on our new online auction site will begin soon after the Spring Plant Sale. The quilt will remain on auction for only ten days, which means that the legions of Beekman Boys devotees will have to be quick if they hope to place the winning bid! The last chance to bid-and an opportunity to meet the Beekman Boys and Farmer John-will be at the Sharon Springs Garden Party on June 1 and 2.

Look for a Constant Contact email and check www.landisarboretum.org for more information!

Spring = Renewal

- Wilma Jozwiak

It's time to renew your Landis membership, which runs from May 1 through April 30 of each year. Landis membership comes with benefits like a 10% discount at our Plant and Book Sales and on items from our Acorn Shop. At levels of Basic Family and above, coupons toward one of our classes or workshops also are available. If you are not sure whether your membership is current, email us a tinfo@landisarboretum.org, or call us at [\(518\) 383-3980](tel:5183833980)

You can renew your membership by calling us at [\(518\) 875-6935](tel:5188756935) to use your credit card or request a renewal form, or with PayPal on our website at www.landisarboretum.org (small processing fee). If you are not yet a member, call us - we'll love to help you join!

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About George Landis Arboretum

The Landis Arboretum is a public garden comprising hundreds of acres overlooking historic Schoharie Valley near Esperance, New York. Arboretum founder Fred Lape began the work of developing the Arboretum in the 1950's on Oak Nose Farm, his family homestead. With the support of a bequest from friend and colleague George Landis, Fred aimed to grow every species of woody plant from temperate regions around the world that would survive in the hills of Schoharie County.

Forty acres of the Arboretum are developed with plantings of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous perennials from around the world. The remainder of the property consists of natural areas, woodlands, wetlands, more than 8 miles of trails, and open fields. Among the Arboretum's horticultural features are a labeled collection of nearly all the trees, shrubs and vines native to New York State, as well as collections of notable trees, flowering ornamental trees and shrubs, tough trees for tough sites, conifers, and oaks. Two old growth forests and additional natural areas representing various stages of succession await visitors. The Van Loveland Perennial Garden at the old farmhouse and the recently restored Quarry Garden are seasonal favorites. Interpretive signage aids visitors in their enjoyment and understanding of the collections and ecosystems of the Arboretum.

Now beginning its second 50 years, the Landis Arboretum is the oldest and largest "Garden of Trees and Shrubs" in New York's Capital region. The Landis Arboretum is a valuable cultural and scientific resource that increases each year in scope and community impact.

Fred Breglia, Executive Director
George Landis Arboretum

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