Now and Then in 2010

Celebrating 75 Years of Public Gardening – Discover our Past and Experience our Future

Rutgers Gardens is presently celebrating a milestone of 75 years of public service in horticulture. Even before it was a Rutgers facility, the Superintendent’s house was the home of the Welsh Family Farm (pictured above, right hand corner) and the surrounding land was tilled and planted for food crops. The addition of a ‘pioneering’ style Log Cabin in 1936 (above center) was certainly befitting of this agricultural background. Its inaugural opening was November of 1936. This year marks the 75th year it has been in service for University and Community functions! From that time forward, the Gardens gradually developed, and the Roy DeBoer Evergreen Garden (pictured top left in 1960) was the last major designed addition in 1958. Interestingly, one of the theories for the bowl in which the Evergreen Garden exists was that it served as a soil mine or borrow pit for soil added around the cabin. It is always interesting to understand how one development in the Gardens influences another part of the Gardens!

The history of Rutgers Gardens is interesting and fun to study. Equally as important, we invite you back to live and experience our future! From the newly developed Herb and Community Youth Gardens to the future development of a Horticultural Center, the Gardens will continue to focus upon the plant related needs that are important to the community and University. The Gardens continues to grow and write new pages of history, our hope is for you to experience our future and to become an active part of writing the new pages in the Gardens history.

A Message From Monica

Monica McLaughlin, Staff Horticulturist

This year we have an entirely new team of resident interns and staff, so I would like to designate my space in this newsletter to introducing this fantastic team. Adam Cesanek graduated from Dickinson College with a BS in Biology. While working toward his undergraduate degree he completed an internship at Planting Fields Arboretum. He will now be pursuing the new MSLA at Rutgers University.

Jeffery Kane is a Rutgers student in the department of Ecology and Natural Resources expected graduation is 2011. In addition to working with us, he is also working with Professor Molnar in Hazelnut Research.

Emma Van de Water is a former horticulture intern from the American Horticulture Society, as well as a research intern at Longwood Gardens. She is currently a student of Plant Science at Rutgers University.

Michael Mattingly is a Landscape Industry major. Before coming to us, his summers were spent working at a large garden center. Upon graduation he hopes to pursue a career in the Turf/ Golf industry.

Michael Nola is currently enrolled in the Landscape Architecture program at Rutgers University and plans to pursue a career in the green industry.

Karen Curran returned to school after having a career in the insurance industry. She is a student in Environmental Planning and Design and plans to pursue a career in green roofing business.

Andrew Kilduff is a seasoned veteran of Nursery work and Landscape industry. A student of Rutgers, he is a double major in both Geology and Geology, with a minor in Plant Science. He hopes to enter the field of research in Seismic and atmospheric Hazard Mitigation and emergency.

Phil Detwiler is a Rutgers student in the Landscape department. Phil has worked with tree experts, and in Nurseries. He recently went to Sweden on a month long forestry internship with the Holmin Skog co. His particular interest in the landscape industry is Arboriculture.

Alex Kozar is a Rutgers University Landscape architecture student who spent summer 2009 at a design build firm in north jersey.

Megan Foster has worked at a retail nursery for the past 3 years, as well as private estate gardener. She is a student in the Landscape Industry department and plans to graduate in 2011.

Keep an eye out for these budding horticulturists in the year’s to come!
Directionals

Message from Bruce Crawford, Director

During my summer vacations as a child, I would spend several enjoyable weeks at my grandparent’s house. Every morning my grandfather would rise early and one of his first acts of the day was to open the front door. I am not certain as to why this was part of his ritual, nor did it ever occur to me at the time to ask. In reflection, I suppose it was a gesture that all were invited into their home. Today, part of my daily ritual is to open the entrance gates around 7:00 am at Rutgers Gardens. Yes, the signage states that the Gardens open at 8:00, but – as I assume was my grandfathers’ intent – I truly want all to be welcome!

August 2010 marks my 5th year as Director of Rutgers Gardens. I must admit, it has been a very rewarding and satisfying 5 years! One of my firm convictions is that everyone should be able to grow plants, not only for ornamental appeal, but for dietary purposes as well. With the support of Debbie Henry, Alex Nawrot and enthusiastic children from New Brunswick, the Children’s Community Vegetable Garden is growing beautifully this year!

It has also been rewarding to watch the Gardens student internship and volunteer programs develop. Thanks to the efforts of the Horticultural Manager (Monica McLaughlin) and Gardens Superintendent (Matt Jamicky), along with several generous donations, the internship program is becoming more refined and will see the commencement of a student plant breeding program in 2011. Our volunteers have always been and will continue to be a lifeblood of the Gardens. Between helping with the events and assisting with the care of the Gardens, the growth of the Volunteer Program has, in return, allowed the Gardens to grow!

As I look to the next five years, my intent is to see the development of a more obvious front door for the morning openings and further enhancement of the Gardens facilities. By a more obvious front door, I refer to a very Eco-friendly Horticultural/Visitors Center at the entrance to the Gardens. Through classrooms and displays (both inside and out), the facility will allow the community and Rutgers students to better understand plants and plant communities. Additional development within the Gardens will see the creation of a pedestrian path system that will not impact or alter the current feeling of “innocence” that the Gardens offer the visitor. In other words, the path should not dictate where a person should walk, but merely provide an opportunity to venture in a particular direction. Facilities such as a Conservatory and Horticultural Therapy Garden are also on the list of additions!

Granted, all these dreams will not be fulfilled over the next 5 years! However, it will happen. As always, I welcome your thoughts about the present and future focus of the Gardens. As with any public garden, it is a work in progress and is shaped by within the profession as well as those within the community. If you have questions about the Gardens, the proposed additions or you wish to contribute funding to any of these projects, please write, call or stop at the office. After all, the front door is opened early so that all are welcome!

4th Annual Gardens Gala

On Thursday, September 16th from 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm the “Hamilton Award for Dedication and Outstanding Commitment to the Rutgers Gardens” (named for our friend and longtime colleague, “Doc” Hamilton) will be presented to Dr. Elwin Orton. Dr. Orton began his long career in plant breeding at Rutgers in 1960.

The Gardens will also honor Douglas Blonsky, RLA (CC’83), President of the Central Park Conservancy, with the Distinguished Achievement in Horticulture award to recognize his dedication to restoring Central Park to its original splendor.

At this year’s Gala, Mr. Blonsky will give a special presentation entitled “A Civic Triumph”, the public/private partnership that has raised over $500 million dollars over the last 30 years to restore Central Park to its position as one of the most magnificent and emulated parks in the world. For more info visit - rutgersgardens.rutgers.edu/GardenGala.htm
Community Youth Garden
Debbie Henry, Children’s Programs Coordinator

Do you remember the first time you saw how a pea grows? How about a radish or a Brussels sprout? If you enjoy gardens and gardening, you may have grown one or all of these, or seen them growing in another garden. But many children do not have the opportunity to see how their food is grown. Many children do not think about food coming from anywhere except the supermarket. Many children do not get the chance to taste a ‘just-picked’ fruit or vegetable. That is why children should be given the opportunity to spend time in the garden.

Towards this end, the Rutgers Gardens has teamed up with children from the New Brunswick after-school/summer-care programs to develop our Community Youth Garden. We have been working together with these third, fourth and fifth graders to put together a showcase garden with a variety of vegetables from around the world. Throughout the summer they will continue to care for the garden, watching the plants grow from seeds to harvest and beyond -- they will have the chance to taste that just-picked vegetable. The children are enjoying their time in the garden, and along the way they are learning about horticulture, teamwork, environmental issues and nutrition. Although the children and I have worked hard to put together this garden, it wouldn’t be what it is today without the boundless energy and enthusiasm of the student intern we have working with us this summer. Alex Nawrot is a Junior majoring in Environmental Sciences, and her knowledge about vegetable gardening, along with her many years of experience working with young people, have been a tremendous asset in creating this year’s children’s garden.

So come visit our garden. Bring a child with you or just bring your child-like curiosity to learn about some interesting plants and have some fun. Our garden, located behind the Donald B. Lacey display beds, can be toured any time, but we hope you will also join us at the Garden’s Open House event on July 31st when we will have special children’s activities.

Volunteer Corner
MaryAnne McMillan, Volunteer Coordinator

On any given day in the gardens, you will come upon that special person that gives of their own time to help make the garden a better place for all to enjoy! It could be a volunteer in the Sun and Shade Garden pulling those viscous weeds, a volunteer watering or weeding or another volunteer who has taken on the task of working in the roses, collecting data which will be used in evaluating this trial garden. Volunteers are helping archive our garden’s history and keeping our labeling and records up to date.

Recently I asked an active volunteer her thoughts “On being a Rutgers Gardens Volunteer.” She replied: “Three years ago, on one of my plant shopping expeditions at the annual Mother’s Day sale, Bruce Crawford, the director of the gardens, suggested I sign up as a volunteer. I figured it was a way to find out what the volunteer program was all about.

I have met all kinds of wonderful people who also volunteer, gained a lot of knowledge and had the sense of satisfaction you can only get by pitching in and getting things done. Volunteering at the Gardens doesn’t cost anything but your time. And at that, there is no pressure - give as much or as little as you can, when you can. I am by no means any kind of gardening expert, you don’t have to be in order to be utilized. I truly have gotten back so much more in a sense of accomplishment, belonging to a community, and knowledge than the hours I gave happily working for the Gardens.”

Thanks Jan Schmidt for being such a wonderful addition to our amazing volunteers and for sharing your story!

2010/2011 Calendar of Events

Gardens Gala - September 16, 2010
Fall Festival - October 10, 2010
Hollydays Festival - December 4, 2010
2010 Garden Series Classes - For information please visit - rutgersgardens.rutgers.edu/classes
Rutgers Day - April 30, 2011
Spring Flower Fair - May 6,7,8,2011
Open House and Wine Tasting - July 30, 2011
Please Help the Gardens Grow!

Rutgers Gardens has continued to grow with support from friends like you. Help us to continue with our plans to add new programs and features to the Gardens in the coming years. Please consider donating by becoming a Gardens member or helping us to reach our goal for the Doc and Ellen Hamilton Internship Endowment Fund. All contributions are tax deductible.

Name____________________________________

Address_______________________________________________________

_____ Yes, I would like to donate to the Doc and Ellen Hamilton Internship Endowment Fund in the amount of $_________. Please make checks payable to the Rutgers University Foundation or fill in your credit card information below.

_____ Yes, I would like to become a member of Rutgers Gardens as:

___ Friend $40.00  ___Family $65.00  ___ Educator $55.00  ___ Sponsor $150.00  ___ Benefactor $500.00

Credit card number___________________________________________Exp Date_______ 3 Digit security Code______

Signature___________________________________________________________________________________