

Westchester Fairfield Horticultural Society

Founded 1910

An Educational and Community Service Organization

www.westfairhort.org

West Fair Hort News

August 2008

July Meeting

On Sunday, July 13th, the Westchester Fairfield Horticultural Society met at Lasdon Park in Katonah, NY. What a great day, with sunny, clear skies - just beautiful for touring this beautiful landscape. Lasdon is a magnificent 234-acre property consisting of woodlands, open grass meadows and formal gardens that offer picturesque area for viewing various tree, shrub and flower specimens from all over the world.

We were few in number, nine, but eager to view this park. We were led by horticulturist Tolly Beck, who did a wonderful job in educating us as we strolled the many paths. We began at the lower end by the entrance pavilion. A Fragrance Garden is planted along a path backed by a decorative, latticed deer fence and lined with fragrant small trees, shrubs, and perennials. We walked up the slope and entered the Synoptic Garden, continuing along a path lined on both sides with shrubs arranged in alphabetical order, grouped by genus. Specimen shrubs range from A-Z, from Abelia to Zenobia. Along the way, we observed the many interesting shrubs underplanted with groundcovers and perennials. The grounds were well groomed and the gardens were manicured to perfection. The maintenance is done by a small crew of four. We went to the upper terrace and looked across the path to the Magnolia Field, which houses the memorial for Ilse Biederman who was responsible for maintaining the grounds. This open field is the future home of the Glass House Conservatory costing about one million dollars. It is projected to display tender plants for year-round exhibits. Just beyond that we observed the William and Mildred Lasdon Memorial Garden from the overlook. The garden was made possible by the Lasdon's daughter, Mrs. Nanette Laitman of Manhattan. The design for the garden includes a formal garden with a central fountain and four corner beds bordered by boxwood hedges, surrounding floral displays changed three times throughout the season. Beyond the Synoptic Garden and enclosing the formal garden are a line of mature spruce trees and a perennial border leading to the mansion. The cabana for the former pool has been converted into a plant and gift shop. An old, working greenhouse is used by the Friends of Lasdon Park

and Arboretum to grow plants, started in February from seeds and cuttings, for the annual fundraising plant sale in May. The head house was recently renovated.

Many ideas for your own property can be achieved by this educational tour. Tolly was great and knowledgeable.

There was judging of horticultural displays. Tony Marzullo brought lilies and a daylily and Sharon Reekstin brought a summer arrangement in a white basket. The Reekstins provided a wonderful mini-lunch for all to enjoy.

There are many free events at Lasdon, held on weekends, for which you can bring a picnic basket and have an enjoyable time listening to great music. A performance stage is set up in summer for lunchtime Jazz on Fridays and evening concerts on some Saturdays.

Once you visit Lasdon Park you will be sure to visit it again; I know I will.

- Ron Reekstin

Strickland Brook Park Garden

Join Cora Burnham and the crew of volunteer members for a work session at the garden we maintain near the Cos Cob Library, on Saturday, July 19, and Saturday, August 16, 2008, 10:00 AM to 12 noon. Come dressed for garden work. Please call Cora at 203-869-0011 by 9:00 AM on the work day if bad weather threatens.

Obituary

Past President and Life Member of the Westchester Fairfield Horticultural Society Joseph Makowski died recently. Joe was the former caretaker of the Evans/Anselmo estate. The Board of Directors of West Fair Hort sends condolences to Joe's widow Helen and her three adult children.

Westchester Fairfield Horticultural Society, Inc. www.westfairhort.org

For information, contact: Mary Jo Palmer (203) 661-8626

Newsletter Editor: Eleanor Hoffman; Contributor: Ron Reekstin (meeting report), John Shalvoy, Kate Liba
2008 Board Members: Cora Burnham, Strickland Brook Park Garden; DJ Haverkamp, Publicity; Mary Ann Hoberman, At-Large; Eleanor Hoffman, Program & Editor; Kate Liba, President; Dinsa Mehta, Vice President; Serle Mosoff, Treasurer; Mary Jo Palmer, Horticulture; John Shalvoy, Hort Events; Sharon Shisler, Planning; Loretta Stagen, Conservation