



George Landis Arboretum

NEWSLETTER

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January, February, March 1982

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - 1981

The winter of 1980-81 was the most destructive in the thirty years of the arboretum's history. The worst damage seems to have happened in December, a month with temperatures mostly below 0°F but with occasional thawing days followed by an immediate drop to -20°F or lower. Destruction was particularly severe on flower buds. All *Cornus florida* flower buds, either on cultivated trees or in native stands, were killed. Flower buds on many native *Amelanchiers* were killed. About half the lilac buds were killed, and nine-tenths of all rhododendron and azalea buds. Then flowers from buds that had not been killed, opening in late April and May, were hit by late freezes which prevented fertilization. This included flowers of apple, pear, plum, and about half or the Asiatic crabapples.

There was also considerable damage to leaf buds and stem growth. The severity may be judged by the fact that our thirty foot Dawn redwood which had never before been damaged by cold, was killed two thirds back to the base, and a ten foot Cedar of Lebanon, the Arnold's hardy strain, was completely killed.

Since the climate of the George Landis Arboretum is probably as severe as any other arboretum in the United States, and since our collection contains many species on the

borderline of hardiness, we are preparing a detailed discussion of the damage, which will be distributed when completed.

In 1982 we expect to register six new lilac cultivars. These are seedlings from two Russian hybrids, 'The Cheat', a large paniced double purple, were outstanding. The nearest approach to them in the French hybrids is 'Paul Thirion'. Three seem sufficiently distinctive to register and distribute. Seedlings of 'Caprice', a double pink fading blue, were less exciting, but some remarkable for vigor of flower, and one for a clear double blue. The cultivars will be registered under these names: 'George Landis', 'Van Loveland', 'Esperance', 'Mohawk', 'Schoharie', and 'Catskill'.

Four years ago we bought from Guy Nearing, the rhododendron breeder, very small plants of his latest crosses. Breeding particularly for hardiness, he used 'Catalpa', a white form of *Rhododendron catawbiense*, for hardiness in the large-leaved groups and *R. carolinianum* in the Lepidote series. We have kept all of these plants in cellar storage in winter, to assure their safe growth until they blossomed. A few of the Lepidote crosses bloomed early, and though all were good, none seemed more exceptional than Nearing's early crosses like 'Ramapo' and 'Windbeam' or than the PJM crosses.

Last Spring, however, we struck pay dirt. A cross, 'Catalpa' X 'Azor', a *R. griersonianum* hybrid, produced one truss of large flowers, reddish in bud, opening to salmon-pink, a beauty. It is somewhat similar, maybe even a little better, than 'Scintillation' of the Dexter hybrids. The plant was set out in the rhododendron section of the arboretum this spring. Cuttings have been taken. This coming winter will test its hardiness here. If hardy, it will be a valuable addition to rhododendrons for the Northeast. If not, it will still be valuable for the Long Island-Washington area. We plan to name, register, and distribute it.

For the past few years, the arboretum has carried out a series of best gardens of annual flowers and vegetables. This was supported by a grant from the Natural Heritage Trust of New York State. This spring that support was withdrawn. It was an expensive project because of the labor involved, the common deterrent now for projects in all small institutions. The arboretum cannot afford to continue it alone. Our last report on the project has been sent out.

The Board of Trustees of the Arboretum conducted this summer an intensive and successful drive for funds for the arboretum, and is developing a tighter knit organization of Friends of the Arboretum as a separate unit, but closely tied in with the Board of Trustees. A report on this follows.

Fred Lape, Director
October 12, 1982



FRIENDS COMMITTEE CREATED TO CHANNEL SUPPORT FOR THE ARBORETUM

The Trustees of the Landis Arboretum created the Friends of the Arboretum Steering Committee in September, 1981 and appointed Forest M. Corbin as the chairperson. Since that time, the Friends Committee has been meeting to explore future directions the arboretum might take to maintain the extensive grounds and the quality programs currently being offered, and to consider ways to encourage a broader spectrum of people to use what the arboretum offers.

The George Landis Arboretum has been known among education and arboretum professionals for many years and is highly regarded in those circles. The decision has been made to make the arboretum more accessible to the public and to offer a wider selection of general interest programs.

The committee has three major priorities. The first is to develop a comprehensive public relations program, of which this newsletter is a part. The second is to cultivate a strong network of volunteer support, both to work behind the scenes doing clerical work and grounds maintenance, and trained volunteers to lead tours and help with other more specialized tasks. And third, the committee is looking at ways to assure continuing financial support for the arboretum so both long- and short-term goals may be accomplished.

In addition to the short-term goals mentioned, long-term plans being considered by the Trustees and friends include a new library to hold the arboretum's extensive collection of books, and a visitors' center.



CALENDAR

GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM

Esperance, NY 12066
(518)-876-6935

Summer 1982

May 8	10 a.m.	Nature Walk	Fred Lape
May 15	10 a.m.	Bird Walk	Sayla Ruscitto John Bousman
May 22	10 a.m.	Bulbs	Merrill Bousman
May 29	10 a.m.	Starting Seeds Early	Agnes DeKay
June 5	1 p.m. 2 p.m.	Rare Plant Sale - Friends of the Arboretum Rare Plant Sale - General Public The Adirondack Chapter of the American Rock Garden Society will hold an exhibit and sale of rock garden plants also.	
June 12	10 a.m.	What Can Be Done With Old Roses	Mr. and Mrs. Frank Earing
June 19	10 a.m.	Plant Propagation	Richard Southwick
June 26	10 a.m.	Farming in Schoharie Valley	Mrs. Max Shaul
July 10	10 a.m.	Nature Walk	Fred Lape
July 17			
July 24	1 p.m.	Bonsai Exhibit and Clinic	
July 31	10 a.m.	Dependable Perennials	Sayla Ruscitto
August 7	10 a.m.	Nature Walk	James Bates
August 14	10 a.m.	Pruning Trees and Shrubs	James Bates
August 21	10 a.m.	Begonias in Plant Breeding	Gilbert Harlow
August 28	10 a.m.	Slides - Mexican Trees	Fred Lape
September 11	1 p.m.	Flower Arrangement	Sally Gage
September 18	10 a.m.	Berried Shrubs for Home Planting	Merrill Bousman
September 25	10 a.m.	Slides	Mrs. E. Corning
October 2	10 a.m.	Foliage Walk	Fred Lape

ALL EVENTS ARE ON SATURDAYS AND ARE FREE. FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO BRING A LUNCH, PICNIC TABLES ARE AVAILABLE.

Serving on the committee are:
Forest Corbin, Glenmont, Lewis
Arthur, Waterford, Mrs. Hector Blair,
Schenectady, Mrs. Herman Finkbeiner,
Rexford, Robert Gaesser, New
Baltimore, Arthur Garland, Scotia,
and Mrs. Albert Gdula, Albany.

Forest Corbin, Chairperson
Friends of the Arboretum
Steering Committee



SPRING PLANT AND FLOWER SHOW

APRIL 1, 2, AND 3, 1982

Center City, State and Jay Streets,
Schenectady, NY. (Thursday, 12-9,
Friday and Saturday 10-5.)

Sponsoring groups include:
Eastern New York Begonia Society,
Federated Garden Clubs of Schenectady
County, Greenhouse and Indoor Plant
Association, Indoor Light Gardening
Society of America, Northeastern
New York Orchid Society. Invited
exhibitors include: American Rock
Garden Society, BOCES Ornamental
Horticulture Class, George Landis
Arboretum, SUNY Cobleskill, and
Schenectady County Cooperative
Extension. Regular admission
\$1.50, Senior Citizens \$1.00,
Children under 12, 75¢.

HINTS FOR SPRING

(Reprinted from GARDEN OF TREES
AND SHRUBS, Fred Lape, Cornell
University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1965.)

"In the climate of central
New York State, early spring is
the safest time to plant nearly
everything, with the possible
exception of the Asiatic magnolias,
which seem to do best if they are
set out in late April, while they
are in bud. All bare-rooted
specimens should go in as soon as
the frost is out of the ground.
If the soil contains clay, special
care should be taken during early
spring planting not to pack the
soil too tightly about the roots,
or it will later harden into an
impenetrable brick. At that time
of year, the soil should simply
be allowed to fall around the
roots of its own weight, without
any tamping down. A month or so
later, when the ground has dried
out, go back and walk heavily
around the base of the plant to
close any pockets of air or of
loose earth that would allow the
plant to dry out during the
summer.

Balled and burlapped material
can be handled safely later in the
spring than bare-rooted material.
But the sooner a plant is set out
after the soil is workable, the
quicker it will establish its
roots and the better it will be
able to withstand a sudden drought,
the greatest danger to all trans-
planted material. Any plant, small
or large, that has just been set
out should be mulched immediately,
and the mulch should be left
around it at least throughout the
first summer."



HELP!

The Landis Arboretum needs volunteers. If you have a few hours, or a day, to give each week, or each month, please check one or more of the following fields of interest.

- _____ Guide training - to lead weekend tours of the arboretum.
- _____ Office - receptionist, phone, typing, clerical
- _____ Horticultural - weeding and garden maintenance in designated areas and under staff direction.

Mail to or leave at: _____ Name
Landis Arboretum _____ Address
Esperance, NY 12066 _____
Att: Doris Gdula _____ Phone

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NOTE: Rare Plant Sale Day, June 5, has been designated as membership renewal time. Renew your membership, encourage a friend to join, give a membership as a gift.

Friend, \$10-\$25
Sponsor, \$25-\$50
Supporting, \$50-\$100
Patron, \$100 or more

GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM Membership Application



Please support the extensive work of the arboretum and make a tax deductible contribution.

Name _____
Address _____
_____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Renewal
Amount _____ New
Enclosed _____ Member

THANK YOU!

Members receive a quarterly newsletter, free admission to the lecture series and early admission to the annual rare plant sale. Make your check payable to:

Mail to: GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM
Esperance, NY 12066

WANTED

The donation of a used electric typewriter to the arboretum would be tremendously appreciated. Phone Richard Paul (518) 875-6937.

BONUS FOR FRIENDS

"Successes and Failures," No. 4, December 1981, the detailed discussion of 1980-81 winter damage referred to in the Director's Report above, is available to Friends free when they visit the arboretum. If you wish a copy but you are unable to pick it up at the arboretum, send \$1.00, your name and address, and it will be mailed to you. The report is available to non-members for \$1.00.



GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM
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GENESIS

This newsletter is a sampling - a beginning. We trust it will grow and improve as we gain experience, and as I become familiar with people, their talents and their interests. We welcome your comments, your suggestions, and we heartily encourage you to contribute information for these pages.

Publishing deadlines are the first of February, May, August, and November. You may write or phone me at the address below.

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