

CAPE COD HYDRANGEA SOCIETY

Fall 2015



Fall color on *Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Ruby Slippers'

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I'm very pleased to have been elected to the CCHS Presidency. Thanks to all for your support. And I'm taking the reins with our society being in great shape thanks to Jeanie Gillis' very successful presidency. She has much to be proud of - our membership has grown substantially in number, we became more involved with Heritage and our exceptional Display Garden, and this year we got off to a great participative start with the inaugural Cape Cod Hydrangea Fest. Jeanie also pioneered the creation of the CCHS website which is now moving forward in splendid fashion. Well done Jeanie - thanks for that never failing enthusiasm and wonderful smile!

My thanks also to returning Secretary Mary Ann Staudenmayer and long-time Treasurer Ginny McCabe; your continuing involvement is truly appreciated. And a very big welcome to Martha Harrison for joining our officership as Vice President. She brings great enthusiasm and a strong willingness to participate and I intend to 'reward' her with some important societal responsibilities. Most of our committee chairs are continuing their valued responsibilities as well so we're in great shape to continue to grow in all our hydrangea related involvements.

Case in point - for our major effort with the 2016 Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival, Joan Brazeau has conceived and developed Hydrangea University - a full morning hydrangea learning session featuring CCHS speakers Joan Harrison, Peg Black, and me. This should draw a major crowd and will be held in the Barnstable High School's splendid auditorium on Friday, July 8th - 'opening' day of the Festival. 'Dean' Brazeau has made all the critical arrangements and has organized a supporting team as well. Super job Joan!

I'm also delighted to report that Betsey Godley, with Roberta Gough, will continue to guide the Display Garden Maintenance Team. They have been responsible for putting together a great group of helpers that have contributed significantly to bringing the Garden into its current superb condition. Great effort Betsey and Roberta!

Looking ahead, my goals are modest. The current success of our organization is the direct result of members stepping forward to make a difference. I'd like every member to participate in some fashion simply because they want to, however small the responsibility may be - and most importantly, to learn from the experience and share in its reward. Lastly, I've invited our past Presidents to join our Board of Directors to provide guidance and counsel on society issues. Their accumulated wisdom will surely help to guide the CCHS future in a positive manner.

The Holiday Season will soon be upon us. Mary Kay and I will be hosting the CCHS Christmas Party again this year on Tuesday, December 1st and we're looking forward to another great turnout. My very Best wishes to All for a great Thanksgiving weekend and an excellent Christmas and New Year.

Mal

MAL'S CORNER



Good Summer but too little Rain

Overall we had a great vacationer's summer here on Cape Cod; lots of warm sunny days including a few hot ones for us with temps reaching 90° on a couple of occasions. With the humidity staying uncomfortable high well into early September, we spent some tough sweaty working days in our gardens. While the hydrangeas don't mind the high humidity, they sure don't like the long dry spells that was also the norm this summer. Despite the rain this past week (today is Nov. 13), our year to date rainfall remains 2.5" below a year to date norm that has been slowly shrinking over the last dozen years. Irrigation - via surface tubing with in-line emitters, or soaker hose - has become an almost mandatory installation for major plantings. Perhaps we should hold a workshop on this important subject late next spring.

Fortunately we are beginning to experience some cooler temps which favorably lower plant transpiration rates. Fall rains are very important to our deciduous hydrangeas - particularly the *H. macrophyllas*. When they enter dormancy in a less than turgid state, they do not have sufficient stored reserve to withstand a severe winter - as we had the past two years. The Farmer's Almanac is forecasting another cold winter for us in 2016. By contrast, the heating oil industry is predicting lower fuel demand based on the continuing El Nino dominate weather projections. Hopefully this latter, more science-based prediction will prevail.



the plants looked good except for two where the irrigation rings had become clogged. The prize, however, goes to the *H. paniculatas*. The number of plantings throughout the garden has increased substantially over the last few years and they all looked good. Note the 'Limelight' entrance row.

Enjoying the Fall

I was in the Display Garden at Heritage early October taking 'stock' of the collection. Blooms on some of the *H. macs* had antiqued nicely with lovely blends of greens, blues, and mauve shades. Others have faded to dull tan, indicative of the end of another growing season. Ditto for the *H. arborescens* and the *H. serratas* too. The *H. quercifolia* area in the garden is new this year; most of the modest number of blooms had all but expired but

Some Fall Gardening Reminders

I planted a *Hydrangea involucrata* variety in the Display Garden late September. It's a 'volunteer' from the original plant I brought from Tasmania, Australia many years ago. The plant grows well in our climate and this variety begins blooming around the first week of July and continues 'til frost closes the door late in November. Several other sightings today prompted the following fall reminders.

- Leaf spotting - particularly cercospera - becomes more aggressive in the fall. *H. serrata* are most sensitive, especially if the plant receives direct sun. But it's not fatal. Relocating the plants to more shaded or dappled sun locations might be a consideration.
- Fall is a good time to relocate large hydrangeas of all species. Plants are soon going into dormancy and a killing frost could occur any day now. Good work conditions for the diggerman too. Above ground plant growth has ended but root growth will continue until the root zone soil temp drops below 50F - and that may not occur until after Thanksgiving. I have been busy planting and re-planting the last two weeks and have done so as late as December 15 - and then winter protected - with good results.
- You can prune your *H. paniculatas* and *H. arborescens* in the fall after leaf drop. The recent rain and wind has defoliated all the plants I've looked at recently. With foliage gone, you can see into the 'panics' better and can prune to establish good plant form. And you'll enjoy some good days for this work well into early December.

Enjoy this great time of the year outdoors and in your garden. My best to all, Mal

POTLUCK DINNER AT KINGSWAY – AUGUST 20, 2015



Thank you, Judy Deal, for creating this gorgeous basket of hydrangeas at the front door.



Welcome new members,
Gloria and Paige

(Left to right): Betty Hann, Gloria Buxbaum, Paige Swanson, Elizabeth Payne

Everything about the potluck dinner was delightful. There was the food, of course, and once again we were reminded what good cooks our members are! There was lots of happy conversation as we admired the hydrangeas everyone brought as centerpieces for the tables. Once the meal was over we had a truly interesting and educational session as various members provided information about the hydrangeas they had brought to the dinner. Dan Pessoni told us about Vince Dooley (for whom the 'Dooley' hydrangea is named) commenting that Dan's 'Dooley' was the healthiest 'Dooley' he, Vince Dooley, had ever seen. Talk about a highlight of a garden tour. Peg Black spoke about Cityline™Mars, a lovely bicolor mophead, and Penny Corn showed off an impressive paniculata 'Vanilla Strawberry'. Joan Harrison brought an arrangement made up of her favorite 'Hamburg' in various stages of development, and Sarah Dunbar provided interesting details about the impressive 'Red Star'. (See following photo.) This was a fun learning experience for all.



All we could say was "WOW!" when we placed all the hydrangeas everyone brought in front of the mirror for our now-traditional group photo.

CCHS MEMBERS' DAY AT HERITAGE MUSEUMS AND GARDENS
SEPTEMBER 23, 2015



Joyce and Roger Jenks enjoying CCHS Members' Day at Heritage.
It was interesting to see the fall color on the hydrangeas and a treat to tour
the entire garden on that beautiful fall day.

FALL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 26, 2015
HARWICH COMMUNITY CENTER



Jeanie Gillis, outgoing president, with Mal Condon, newly elected president of the Cape Cod Hydrangea Society.

We owe a great deal of thanks to Jeanie who led our group magnificently during her tenure. THANK YOU, JEANIE! We know it was a lot of work for you. Our society continues in great shape thanks to you.

Our newly elected slate of officers includes Mal Condon (President), Martha Harrison (Vice-President), Mary Ann Staudenmayer (Secretary), and Ginny McCabe (Treasurer).

The speakers at the fall meeting were Lynne Arrigo and Kathy Kuck from Harvest of Barnstable, who used several materials to create floral arrangements including silk flowers and a variety of greens. They offered design tips along the way, and thoughtfully provided a handout to which listeners could refer at a later date. They mentioned the design elements of line, form, space, texture, and color and placed various types of flowers into four categories: line, mass, form, and filler.

We, of course, were interested in the lovely silk hydrangeas used in the demonstration. Samples were passed around so everyone could see them up close.

It was interesting to see the arrangements as they progressed. The finished arrangements became sought-after door prizes at the end of the meeting.



Mal Condon invited Joan Brazeau to detail plans for our main contribution to next summer's Hydrangea Festival. Joan came up with the idea for "Hydrangea University" which will be held at Barnstable High School on the opening day of the 10-day festival. The speakers will be Mal Condon, Peg Black, and Joan Harrison.

Thank you, Dean Brazeau, for organizing this event for us!



This past year Heritage Museums & Gardens decided to make their signage more uniform. Unfortunately that meant our original beautiful sign would no longer be displayed there. Mal Condon picked up our old sign and will keep it secure for us. He will bring it to our spring and fall meetings. Thanks, Mal!



(Right) new members,
Carole and Ray Newman.

WELCOME!



We were delighted to learn about the artistic and photographic talent of new member, Paige Swanson. As you can see from the samples above, her art is stunning. And check out the gorgeous photography samples below. Wish we had more room to include even more photos. Thanks for sharing, Paige!



Paige tells us that all these photos were taken in the CCHS display garden at Heritage Gardens. Beautiful!

DINNER AT OLD YARMOUTH INN October 7, 2015

We enjoyed delicious dinners and great companionship at our annual fall dinner. It was a mainly social event with just a few brief speeches at the end. One speech in particular should be mentioned as it was spot-on. Tom Bartha gave a tribute to Jeanie Gillis that included his wonderment that no matter what was happening during her tenure, Jeanie Gillis was always smiling. Everyone nodded in complete agreement. We don't know how you did it, Jeanie, but you have won our admiration and great appreciation with your constant good humor in all situations. And wonderful leadership!



Paul and Jean Poupart with Mary Kay Condon



Newly elected President Mal Condon with past presidents: Joan Harrison, Joan Brazeau, and Jeanie Gillis



Roberta Best, Gail Johnson, and Caroline Elliott



Mal Condon with Emily Woudenberg
Mal was teasing Emily (our membership chairperson)
that his nametag was no longer accurate. He had to cover up
“Vice” so only “President” showed.
(Hmmm, our president is covering up vices.
Is there a Hydrangea-gate in our future?)



Nancy Brewer, Gina Mullen, and Margaret Rice.



Ruth Nelson with Gina Mullen

EDITOR'S NOTE

This newsletter is out later in the fall than I had planned due to a new addition to the family. I spent nine days in South Carolina celebrating the birth of my new granddaughter, Beatrice Annabelle Clark, and spending lots of quality time with her 4-year-old sister, Charlotte. Mother and father and sister and baby are all doing well. Grandmother is delighted! One story: little Charlotte refers to little Beatrice as "Baby Beatrice". "Can I hold Baby Beatrice?" "Is Baby Beatrice hungry?" "Where are the pictures of Baby Beatrice?" Her daddy said, "Charlotte, what are you going to call Baby Beatrice when she's all grown up?" Without hesitation she replied, "Grownup Beatrice." (I had to share this story with my siblings: Grownup Maureen, Grownup Barbara, Grownup Chris, and Grownup Greg.)

The name "Beatrice" came as a surprise to me. My daughter said she just likes the name. The "Annabelle" can be directly attributable to the Annabelle hydrangeas my daughter planted at the front of their house, at my urging. (See, you thought this little side trip into personal territory had nothing to do with hydrangeas!) ☺

-Joan Nonna Harrison



DO YOU WANT TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER?

SEND IN YOUR DUES PAYMENT NOW!

The winter newsletter will go out to members who are current with dues. Many of you paid at the September meeting but not all of you were able to attend that meeting. We understand how easy it is to overlook something like this in the holiday season, hence this reminder. Send your payment to the address below, right away, before you forget! Make check payable to Cape Cod Hydrangea Society, Inc. \$25.00/individual. \$30.00 for two-person household.

A BIG THANK YOU goes to Mal and Mary Kay Condon for the delightful holiday open house they hosted on December 1st. Pictures from the party will appear in the winter newsletter.

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