A Magnolia denudata on the Sears estate, Commonwealth Avenue, Boston. From the Archives of the Arnold Arboretum.

TO BE CONTINUED

The Fall issue of *Arnoldia* will contain additional articles on parks and open space in the Boston area.
Volunteers in Children's Program Help Young Botanists Sprout

Over the last five years, volunteers in the Arnold Arboretum's School Programs have found the old saying, "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin," is a pretty good observation. The volunteers say it seemed especially true for this year's group of kids—nearly 3,000 of them—for the most part city dwellers, who participated in the Arboretum's nature adventures and discovered a new green space.

Third through sixth graders come with their classes to explore the Arboretum in one of four field-study experiences. Even scrappiness, indifference, and sleepiness are overcome in these magic explorations, and the kids return from their tours of the Arboretum absolutely glowing with the excitement of their new discoveries.

Each field study—"Seeds and Leaves," "Hemlock Hill," "Around the World with Trees," and "Flowers"—begins with a classroom-type period in the lecture hall. Then volunteers distribute hand lenses (inexpensive versions of those used by real botanists) and set out in small groups to discover that "nature passes art" in the Arboretum.

Volunteers help kids to see how well a flower advertises its presence, to swoop down on "helicopters" and "hitchhikers" (some names for travelling seeds), to explore for the (Benjamin) Franklin tree, or to be astonished by the cathedral-like world under the hemlocks.

The program is made possible, in part, by contributions from the Junior League of Boston and the Junior League Garden Club. Project chairwoman for the Junior League Garden Club is Ruth Wilson of Wellesley, who has worked as a volunteer in the Arboretum's School Program for three years.

According to Diane Syverson, the Children's Program Coordinator, the Junior League funded for many years the Embankment Gardens, where inner-city kids learned about vegetable gardening. Now the Arboretum is the lucky recipient of the League's largesse. Mrs. Wilson says, "The program helps city kids to explore aspects of nature—a whole new world right at their door."

Recently, Mrs. Wilson reflected that her grandmother was responsible for introducing her to gardening and nature. As a young girl, she had been asked to keep a notebook on wildflowers, pressing them between its pages as she found them and learned their names. When Mrs. Wilson is not helping young botanists to bloom at the Arboretum she is tending her own garden in Wellesley, learning

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."—Shakespeare
about desert plants in Arizona, or watching her own grandchildren sprout.

Even though she is a flower enthusiast, she enjoys teaching the autumn field-study experience. "It's then," she says, "the children learn about the changes autumn brings to plants and animals—how living things are interconnected."

Learning about nature and why it is important are compelling components of the Children's Program, not only for its students but also for its volunteers, according to Barbara Balasa of Newton and Jane Paquet-Whall of Dorchester. They have been with the Children's Program since its beginning.

In 1981, Mrs. Balasa began work on a horticultural degree at Massachusetts Bay Community College, just after she had been introduced to the Arboretum by Eleanor Trowbridge, one of the Arboretum's long-term supporters. Because Mrs. Balasa believed a children's program could be a very necessary and vital experience for kids, she decided, in addition to starting up her own landscaping business, to find extra time to give to this program and to children. She has been volunteering every week since then.

Although volunteers seem reluctant to say they have a favorite field study, after some urging she did confess that "Around the World with Trees" is a favorite. "And then there's Hemlock Hill," she said. "That's a favorite also."

Last summer, she took the responsibility for reworking the script of "Around the World," which the volunteers use as a guide in teaching the indoor segment of this field study. At that time, Diane Syverson also laid out new nature-adventure trails on Bussey Hill. This field-study experience introduces kids to plant hunting through their own explorations and to some of the fascinating personalities who have hunted plants for the Arboretum.

"There is a real need in the Boston Public Schools," Mrs. Balasa says, "for a resource like the Arboretum. When the students are here, we show them that this is a living tree museum and a wonderful resource in the city. Just think about Hemlock Hill, for instance. It's a natural woods, and it's right in the city. It's wonderful to see how enraptured the kids are when they first discover it."

Another "old" timer in the Children's Program (although she's a young mother with sons 5 1/2 and 2 1/2) is Jane Paquet-Whall. She also has been a volunteer in the program since its inception. Mrs. Paquet-Whall grew up in Jamaica Plain and remembers the grand old man in her neighborhood who'd bring all the kids on the block to the Arboretum. He would fill up his old Model-T with as many children and loaves of bread as it would hold and drive over to feed the ducks on the Arboretum's ponds. Mrs. Paquet-Whall has been coming to the Arboretum every week since.

"None of the others had the sign for dreams, and dreams are really important, aren't they?" she said. While the Children's Program is teaching children about botany, its beautiful trees and green spaces are also widening the horizons of many city kids and providing them dreams. As she says, dreams are "really important."

Mrs. Paquet-Whall became an Arboretum volunteer after she read an article in the Boston Globe about volunteer opportunities. Readers of Arnoldia who would like to participate in the Children's Program as volunteers should call Diane Syverson at (617)524-1718.

This is the second in a series of three articles on volunteers in the Children's Program.
Arboretum’s 1988 Lilac Poster Is Abloom

From more than 200 submitted artworks, a jury chose "Spring Lilacs" by Lincoln artist Shirley Mossman Nisbet for reproduction on the 1988 Lilac Poster.

Mrs. Nisbet, who has enjoyed tremendous success as an abstract artist, has only recently become interested in flowers as subjects for her work.

"Flowers began to emerge, unexpectedly, into my work," she said, "during the summer and autumn of 1985 and 1986. I became fascinated by the brilliance and translucence of flowers and the power of their growth out of the dark soil, and I started to try to express those contradictory qualities in my paintings."

"Spring Lilacs" is more than a pretty picture of a lilac. As critic Joanna Shaw-Engle of Kensington, Maryland, wrote, "Shirley Nisbet's flowers literally explode from the canvas and paper holding them." The 1988 Lilac Poster is vibrant—its lilacs made lively by striking color contrasts of purple, blue, and raspberry.

Proceeds from the sale of the posters go to support the restoration of the Arboretum's famous Lilac Collection. The cost per poster is $23, which includes postage and handling.

To order, please call The Shop at the Arboretum at (617)524-1718 or write to the Arboretum, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. MasterCard, Visa, and American Express credit cards are accepted.

Arboretum’s Horticultural Training Program Attracts a World-Class Group

During the summer the Arnold Arboretum offers students the opportunity to learn horticulture through hands-on training. The horticultural trainees work in a variety of jobs, either in grounds maintenance, greenhouse and nursery operations, or mapping and labelling of the plant collections.

As part of the program, trainees also enroll in two courses, an eight-week intensive horticultural maintenance program and a six-week woody-plant identification laboratory.

This year's trainees are:

- James Blauth
  Westford, MA
- Jodi Bottoms
  North Powder, OR
- Gerald Brown
  Boston, MA
- Hugh Chapin
  Cambridge, MA
- Brett Christianson-Haas
  Weston, MA
- Chris Dowling
  Chestnut Hill, MA
- Russell Forbes
  Balconnie, N.S.W., Australia
- Stefan Helleckes
  Neuemrade, West Germany
- Brian Muchow
  Charlottesville, VA
- Paul Pfeifer
  Sulfur Springs, TX
- Bruce Rivers
  South Hadley, MA
- Catherine Rosenberg
  Cambridge, MA
- Morgan Schmidt
  Belmont, MA
- Stephanie Shapiro
  Chicago, IL
- Jaqueline Veal
  New Cumberland, WV
Park Rangers Begin Fifth Year of Service at Arboretum

The Boston Park Rangers were formed in the nineteenth-century tradition of "park keepers" as conceived by Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of the Boston Park System, and championed by Dr. Peter Ashton when he was director of the Arnold Arboretum. Along with some of Boston's downtown parks, the Arboretum was one of the original sites for the program.

Much of the impetus to make the Arboretum one of the pilot sites came from the Arboretum Committee, a nonprofit organization of loyal neighbors. As part of their effort to increase the overall safety in the Arboretum, they helped raise money for the Ranger Program. The Program began with 20 rangers, four of whom were assigned to the Arboretum.

With the Boston parks undergoing a broad renovation ($489 million has been committed for capital improvements), the Ranger Program has expanded to 40 rangers. Gene Survillo has been their executive director from the Program's inception.

During the summer months, the Rangers not only keep the Arboretum safe but offer educational tours and classes. They are also available for guest lectures, slide presentations, and classroom programs. On-site program including birdwatching, orienteering, and guided public tours.

For a schedule of activities or more information, call (617) 522-2639.

Got a Question? Arboretum's Plant Line Has the Answer

When Barbara Emeneau, of Winchester, asked about volunteer opportunities at the Arboretum in 1981, she said, "I really don't know what I can do for the Arboretum, but I'm willing to try. I'm pretty fair at pulling up ragweed, if that's useful to the staff." When you have a plant-related question, you'll find out that Barbara Emeneau is good at much more than pulling up ragweed!

She and C. J. Patterson, of Norwell, are the Arboretum's Answer-Women and Plant Doctors par excellence. They answer those questions that come in by phone or mail—such as, "What can I do about my hydrangea?" or "Can I grow an apple tree in Arizona?" or "I have a nice tree with red flowers. What is it?" From 1 to 3 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays, Mrs. Emeneau and Mrs. Patterson give sage advice to green thumbs and green horns alike.

Mrs. Patterson says, "It used to be quiet in the winter, and we could catch up on some of our filing, but business has gotten brisk even when gardens are under snow cover.

Now the two volunteers estimate they answer between 25 and 30 calls on a winter afternoon, but 40 percent of all calls come during May and June! They also handle mail inquiries, which come from around the world. Often, the inquiries are for historical information and come from libraries and arboreta.

The most interesting question lately came from the World Book Encyclopedia, which had recently discovered a piece of conflicting information. Someone in California was claiming to have been the first to introduce the dawn redwood (Metasequoia glyptostroboides) into cultivation in the West. With the assistance of Sheila Connor, horticultural librarian, and Jennifer Quigley, curatorial assistant, the story of the dawn redwood's introduction by the Arnold Arboretum was xeroxed and sent off to World Book.

Members who have plant-related questions may call the Plant Line at (617) 524-1718 between 1 and 3 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays. The Answer-Women will also be available at the Annual Plant Bonus, Sale, and Auction on Sunday, September 18, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Case Estates in Weston.