Maurice Sheehan and the recently restored "Rockery Spring."
Photo by P. Del Tredici.

Rockery Spring Uncovered

This year Maurice Sheehan is celebrating his twenty-fifth year as a grounds crew member at the Arnold Arboretum. Only Michael Gormley has been here longer than Maurice, by a scant six months. Both men deserve hearty congratulations for their hard work and long-time dedication to the institution.

This year, Maurice was involved in an unusual restoration project: to uncover an old spring that had been an important part of the natural and social ecology of the Arboretum during its early days, but had been forgotten in recent times. Christened "Rockery Spring," this freshwater outlet provided clean, cool water to generations of Arboretum visitors. A pipe leading from the spring was installed in the late 1800's when the nearby road was built, and until the drinking fountains were installed in the 1930's, it served as the only source of clean water available to the public. And even after the drinking fountains were installed, the popularity of the spring remained, particularly in late summer, because the water was always cold.

In the old days, visitors to the Arboretum would sit on the large sandstone rock and put their cups under the ever-flowing pipe. At one time the spring was fenced to keep leaves from blowing in and clogging it up. But time and vandalism took their toll, and around 1965 the fence had to be taken down. Following this, Rockery Spring fell into disrepair, becoming choked with leaves and overgrown with vegetation. Eventually, almost everyone forgot about it except Maurice, who suggested to Superintendent Pat Willoughby that the spring ought to be restored to its former state. Pat thought it was a great idea, and in April of this year the restoration project was begun.

As well as pulling off twenty years of plant growth, new puddingstone stepping stones were installed to bring the spring back to its original condition. Clean gravel was added to the stone path and new plantings were put in below the spring, including ferns, astibe, lilies-of-the-valley, bugbane and Kirengeshoma palmata. Thanks to Maurice we now have a beautiful "new" feature at Arnold Arboretum, just across the road and down from the rockery. Take a look at it next time you visit, but please don’t drink the water since its quality has not yet been tested.
The 1990 Arboretum Interns Arrive for Spring

Ever since the days of E. H. Wilson, the Arnold Arboretum has been offering students summer internships in horticulture. The program has grown in breadth and depth over the years and has attracted world-wide recognition for its high quality.

The interns get hand-on experience in several areas, including the grounds, the library, the greenhouse, and plant records, in Jamaica Plain and at the Case Estates. As part of their training they participate in classes two afternoons a week to study woody-plant identification, horticultural maintenance, and landscape design. Several field trips supplement the classroom learning.

This year eighteen interns were chosen from a record number of applicants to the program from Europe, Canada, and the United States. They are graduate or undergraduate students in landscape design, ecology, and plant and soil science.

Some of the 1990 Arboretum interns: top left, Julia Hintringer, Putzbrunn, West Germany; David Callard, Winchester, MA; Judith Wasserman, Cambridge, MA; Karlton Holmes, Cambridge, MA; Donna Harrington, (no longer here); Carol Kohler, South Hadley, MA; Mary Altermatt, Portland, ME; Kevin Williamson, Medfield, MA; Hillary Quarles, New Haven, CT. Not shown are: Gail Allen, Plymouth, NH; Eddie Ashton, Truro, Nova Scotia; Greg Dowd, Dover, MA; Melanie Evans, North Chelmsford, MA; Matthew Giroux, Holderness, NH; Michael King, Amherst, MA; Hillary Maharam, Brookline, MA; Andre McCloskey, Washington, DC; Maryellen Sullivan, Dorchester, MA. Photo by P. Del Tredici.

ARBORETUM PARTICIPATES IN LINNEAN SOCIETY MEETING

The Botanic Gardens Conservation Secretariat and the Commonwealth Science Council sponsored a meeting this May in London on conserving biological diversity in botanic gardens. The program included a presentation on “Preserving Genetic Diversity through Curatorial Practices” by the Arnold Arboretum verification project leader, David Michener, now working as Curator at the Matthaei Botanic Garden of the University of Michigan. Donald Falk of the Center for Plant Conservation spoke on “Integrated Strategies for Conservation of Biological Diversity.” An audience of botanic garden professionals from Sri Lanka, Israel, the Canary Islands, Denmark, Holland and the United States attended, including Nan Sinton from the Arnold Arboretum.

LILACS IN MONTREAL

The Montreal Botanic Garden was host to this year’s International Lilac Convention attended by Jack Alexander, Nan Sinton and former Arboretum Plant Propagator Al Fordham. The program included a visit to Mont Royal Cemetery where E. H. Wilson is buried. At the request of the members of the Lilac Society, Al gave an impromptu speech on his memories of the Arboretum’s renowned plant explorer. The Arboretum will be the site for the International Lilac Society convention in May 1992.
RHODODENDRON SOCIETY VISITS

Over two hundred participants in the American Rhododendron Society’s Annual Convention visited both the Arnold Arboretum in Jamaica Plain and the Case Estates on Sunday, June 3. The weather was cloudy and windy but, thankfully, dry.

In Jamaica Plain the mass plantings of the flame azalea, Rhododendron calendulaceum, were enough in bloom to delight the visitors. The arboretum has one of the largest collections of this spectacular plant anywhere outside of the wild. The Ghent azaleas, which have strong genetic ties to the flame azalea, were at their peak of bloom. Among the evergreen rhododendrons, numerous comments were overheard concerning the improved maintenance in the Rhododendron Dell along Bussey Brook. The work that grounds crew, interns, and volunteers have put into the area over the last two years is clearly paying off.

After leaving Jamaica Plain the visitors went to the Case Estates to view the Rhododendron Society Display Garden in Weston.

SPRING ART EXHIBITION BLOOMS AGAIN

The traditional Lilac Sunday Art Competition was revised this year to accommodate the thousands of glorious subjects and views offered by the Arnold Arboretum. Artists were solicited via art magazines and newsletters. A total of seventy three artists submitted two hundred sixty two slides for initial review. Selections for inclusion in the exhibit were based on relevance as Arboretum subject matter, design quality, and technique. The twenty nine final art works will be on display in the Visitor Center until June 30.

The winner of this year’s competition for the 1990 poster was “Lilac Frenzy” by Maria Paglia of Harvard, Mass. The poster was reproduced as a limited edition of 300 and was signed and numbered by the artist on Lilac Sunday, May 20. It sells for $40.00 and is available at the Bookstore.
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