

Bedford Garden Club
Executive Committee Meeting
Home of Nancy Kronenberg
187 Guard Hill Road, Bedford Corners
October 2, 2019
9:30 a.m.

Attendance: Nancy Kronenberg, Jayni Chase, Liza Clymer, Joyce Corrigan, Wendy Cushman, Debbie Gour, Diane Lewis, Linda Merrill, Varner Redmon, Denise Santomero, Adele Talty, Leslie Wortmann

President Nancy Kronenberg called the meeting to order. She expressed her delight with the September general meeting featuring Stephen Byrns, President, Untermyer Garden Conservancy who gave a scholarly presentation on Persian gardens. Comments from the group were similarly all very positive.

Nancy passed out our brochure for the year, ***Take a Walk on the Wild Side***, with graphics designed by her daughter. As discussed at our previous meeting, rather than guess at program, work shop and trip dates as yet finalized, the program is divided into two sections, one showing dates that have been set and the other with the various activities and meetings anticipated but for which a date has not yet been pinned down. This second section provides space for members to fill in dates as scheduled.

Minutes

The minutes of the September 11 meeting were approved unanimously by hand vote.

Civic Affairs & Conservation

Co-chair Jayni Chase reported briefly on the informative workshop held at her home September 23 with environmental conservationist James Nordgren leading a group around Jayni's property to identify invasives and address ways of eradicating them. Linda commented on how helpful the session had been and greatly appreciated it was by all who attended. Jayni is writing up James's comments to be published on our website.

Jayni had just attended an event held at the home of Bedford resident Murray Fisher, founder of the NY Harbor School and Billion Oyster Project. The event focused on the app **inaturalist** that is being used in Bedford to identify insects on individuals' properties with the goal of developing an inventory of Bedford insects. We were asked to download the app and take photos of insect life on our properties or those of our neighbors. Each photo should be identified by general category, such as caterpillar, bee, beetle, etc., if the exact species is not known, and an expert will assign the id.

Diane Lewis said that Wendy Foulke had brought up the possibility that Rod Christie taking a group of us on a walk in Mianus River Gorge. (Subsequent to this meeting it was announced that Rod will lead us on a walk in the Mianus River Gorge on October 22. He will discuss

“Revitalization of the Eastern Forest: Rebuilding Tree Health, Wildflower Diversity and Forest Resiliency.”)

Floral Design

Leslie Wortmann reminded us that the first workshop will be held October 9. It's geared toward beginners with the focus on color and how various types of flowers work into an arrangement. There were two spots still available. BYOV has been confirmed by Varner for November 26 at her studio. For Greens Day Leslie plans to have three quick demonstrations: an indoor floral decoration - Leslie, wreath making – Lindsay, and an outdoor floral decoration - Betsy Mitchell. The boutique will carry topiaries, paper whites, amaryllises and other plant material, all of which are very popular with our membership.

Flower Shows

Wendy Cushman is ready to arrange our participation in flower shows, but none have been announced as yet. Liza suggested she look into the spring Greenwich Daffodil Society's show. Varner pointed out that while it is not a GCA event it should be put on our website when the details are known.

Horticulture

In the absence of co-chairs **Robin Ashley** and **Dana Worlock**, Nancy reported that the recent propagation workshop at Hedgerow had been a great success and fun for all participants. Robin had also wanted to remind us to sign up for the upcoming trip to Bear Creek Flower Farm, Stamfordville, NY on October 23.

Membership

Nancy filled in for Chairman **Janet Robinson** who will inform us of the number of available slots for membership by November. By that date, Tina Winchester will know who may or may not have paid her membership dues for the year.

Programs

Denise Santomero told us that, regrettably, programing had hit a wall, but she had a contingency plan. Our speaker on Russian Gardens, Sean McMeekin, who had been scheduled for November 20 would need to be moved to another date, probably to the spring. We did have the option she thought to engage **Robert O'Byrne** a writer and lecturer specializing in the fine and decorative arts to speak about Irish Gardens. We will reschedule the November meeting to the 14th from the 20th to avoid conflicting with members' Thanksgiving preparations. The group felt that both the speaker and date change were great ideas. Nancy Vincent and Tori Cox will be asked to get the word out as soon as possible.

The discussion turned to the general topic of programing. The group expressed the sentiment that our exceptionally fine programming is a driving force of the club, both attracting and retaining membership and providing an opportunity for members to connect with each other. Leslie pointed out that it is helpful that our large membership allows us to get the best speakers, better than most of our GCA counterparts. Diane pointed out that we are required to have at least one open meeting a year although we could open up another meeting if there were a compelling reason to draw in the public. Otherwise, the general consensus expressed was that meetings should continue to be for members only.

Nancy shifted the discussion to committees and workshops, mentioning that we had made the decision years ago to have committee workshops open to all members. Varner reiterated the point that we want to be inclusive. Leslie made the distinction between workshop attendees and committee members in that the latter have responsibilities to help plan and provide assistance at workshops. At the September meeting signup sheets for committees had been circulated. Several made comments that the clipboards did not reach many attendees. Signups will now be done online, Nancy said, as clipboards have been shown not to work.

Public Relations

Joyce Corrigan let us know that our Instagram account under the name of **Bedford Garden Club of NY** was up and running. She encouraged all of us to get the app. Nancy K told us that all photos for Instagram should be sent to Joyce who will post. Debbie reported that we have 41 followers, at least a start. Joyce asked for ideas for more in depth articles to be placed in the GCA's **Bulletin** and the **Bedford Record Review**.

While Joyce will handle Instagram and other publicity, Anita Stockbridge also wants photos sent to her from which she will select a limited number to edit in a workshop setting. Varner said that we had once had a club photographer. She questioned whether we had someone taking photos at each meeting? The answer was no. She recommended, with agreement from the group present, that we publish a book of photos chronicling each year. Regarding a club photographer, the suggestion was made that the responsibility would be appropriately put under Anita's aegis to identify a person to take the photos. Francine Walker was mentioned as someone highly qualified.

The subject turned to our archives. Varner, Tina and Nancy V have for some time been going through the archives held in Virginia's barn and transporting them to Tina's barn. They had looked into public storage facilities in the area, but felt that the cost was prohibitive. Denise suggested that rather than rely on a member storing documents, they look into storage at St. Matthew's where, she believes, they have plenty of storage space.

Varner pointed out that the club had never had an Archivist and would benefit greatly from having one. The GCA has an Archivist to whom we might turn to for guidance. Possibly a seedling could take on the responsibility, and that we could make it a responsibility going forward for seedlings to serve in this capacity. Nancy K concluded by saying that for this year, the archival project will be finished by the present team of Varner, Tina and Nancy V, with the possibility of seedlings undertaking archival work in future years. Debbie pointed out that now everything is recorded digitally, making the job much easier in the future.

Adele Talty pointed out that there is a lot of "physical stuff", such as serving pieces, silver and the like, that is moved from one member's house to another as responsibilities are exchanged. There is an inventory kept.

Visiting Gardens

Varner Redmon asked whether a trip to Untermyer Gardens would be appreciated after Steve Byrns's fascinating presentation? The club had visited a few years ago before much more restoration and replanting work had been accomplished. All were enthusiastic and expressed the feeling that, if it could be arranged relatively soon, it would show well in the fall. The location

also benefits from presenting a relatively short drive and a restaurant for lunch already scoped out from our previous visit. Melissa Vail is working on a trip to Morningside Heights although that may not take place until the spring.

National Affairs and Legislation

Diane Lewis reported on her recent Conservation Study trip to Kentucky. The trip was an eye opener highlighting many pollution problems effecting the state's environment. Slide shows were made of various aspects of the trip which she believes would be both interesting and informative for club members to see. The date and venue would need to be explored. The slide shows may also be available on the GCE website.

Diane brought up the subject of the Healthy Lawn pledge. Not all members have as yet signed. Debbie said that, in at least some cases, the member's husband may not want to eschew the use of pesticides and herbicides. Ways of addressing the issue with husbands were discussed.

GCA Second Century Campaign

Liza Clymer spoke of the Campaign by the GCA to help insure the organization's financial health in the coming century. For a club, a donation of \$10,000 is required to be listed on the plaque commemorating the gifts. This amount is in addition to donations club members may have given to the campaign as individuals. The discussion brought up several questions to be addressed:

- Should we contribute? The general feeling was that, particularly as a founding member of the GCA, we should. Varner recommended, and was supported by those present, that any monies we give should be restricted and go to other than overhead. Liza will investigate.
- Are we authorized to use some of our endowment funds? If we could, our ability to fund other projects we think are worthwhile would be reduced.
- Should we ask our membership to contribute to a fund we would set up for the purpose of funding our \$10,000? Should it be done with a special assessment on each member? Varner suggested that the funding of our contribution could be accomplished with a multi-year assessment on members of a small amount per year.

Nancy K summed up saying that we will find out whether our donation can be restricted. At our November executive committee meeting, we will have the benefit of a financial report that Tina, Natica and herself are working on and will be able to finalize our decision on funding through a special assessment.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Linda J. Merrill

Recording Secretary