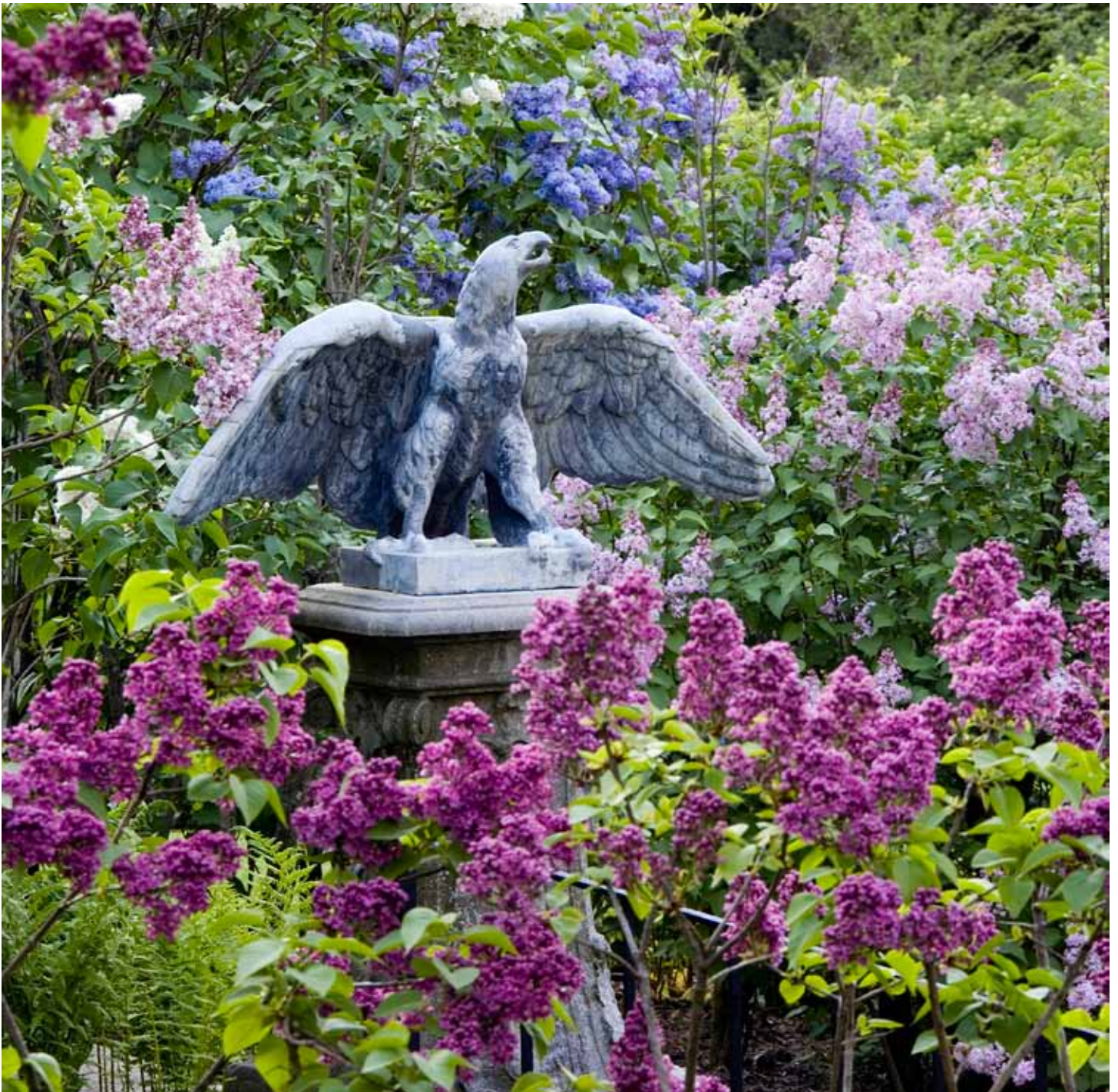


Old Westbury Gardens News

Clippings from the Gardens, Spring 2011



President's Letter

I'm writing this letter using word processing software. These programs are so familiar to most of us that it's difficult to remember when computers, the Internet, and myriad forms of electronic gadgetry weren't even available, much less part and parcel of our business and personal lives.

At Old Westbury Gardens, we've embraced this technology. We bank electronically. Gifts in the Westbury House Shop are bar-coded. The ever increasing number of hits on our website has been a positive, measurable force in providing instant information to the public and ultimately increasing our attendance. From a laptop in a coffee shop on Long Island to a home computer half a world away, web visitors can learn the history of the Gardens, get directions, view slide shows and videos, and register for events and classes. All it takes is a few clicks of a mouse. And in cyberspace, we are open 24-7.

But sometimes I wonder if, with all the e-mail blasting, texting, and tweeting that have become the vernacular of modern communication, we may be in danger of losing the beauty and simplicity of the way things used to be. Is there still room for the face-to-face exchange of the spoken word, and enough patience to await the "snail mail" arrival of a thoughtful, handwritten letter?

In 1994, our founder, Peggie Phipps Boegner, retired as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Although this had already been announced at a meeting, Peggie thought it appropriate to personally reach out to all Old Westbury Gardens members through writing a letter for the newsletter. Among other heartfelt com-

ments, she stated, "I am grateful that circumstances made it possible for me to protect and cherish this beautiful garden that I love and, at the same time, gave me 30 years of pleasurable work among a multitude of good friends."

I enjoy reading the extensive correspondence that was exchanged between Peggie's father Jay and Westbury House designer George Crawley. Over a century ago, everything from broad architectural concepts to intricate construction details - things that would now be the purview of project managers and attorneys armed with handheld devices - was communicated personally, and quite eloquently, through letters shared between these two men.

I appreciate the value of the World Wide Web, including the social network pages and photo/video-sharing sites that have allowed thousands of our visitors to upload snippets of their experiences at Old Westbury Gardens to be viewed and enjoyed by others. But there is nothing like the real thing. The true beauty and uniqueness of the Gardens can never be fully conveyed by a computer. No visit to any site can possibly compare to one that starts at 71 Old Westbury Road. It's something that must be experienced in person, using all the senses.

The next time you come to the Gardens, think about leaving all the electronics at home. A visit here is in many ways a trip back to the early 20th century. It is one perhaps best enjoyed without distractions from any beeps bringing us back to the 21st.

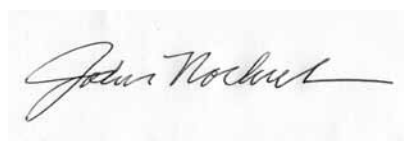


Photo credit: Cover image and Plant Sale, Jim Large. December Dinner and Gardeners' Fair, Franklin Square Photographers. Chip Zaino Ceremony, courtesy Westbury School District. Scouts at the Gardens, Lucy Contreras. Behind the Garden Wall, Kim Johnson. Thursday Group, Pat Speciner. All other images are by Vince Kish.



The cold weather is finally, truly gone. The wisteria and other welcoming signs of spring will soon be here. It's time for a long stroll on these 200 beautiful acres. Or just relax, and take the time to smell the flowers.

December Dinner

Imagine being greeted on a cold December night by an ensemble of carolers straight out of a Dickens novel. That began the experience of being at our December Dinner in the Red Ballroom at Westbury House. Chaired by Trustee Lloyd Zuckerberg and his wife Charlotte Treifus, this dinner was a delightful evening filled with a variety of European traditions. Our honorees, Trustee Lauren and Ragnar Knutsen,



were surrounded by family and friends from Locust Valley, New York City, and New Jersey. In Lauren's honor, the White Drawing Room decorations highlighted a Swedish tradition: a little girl dressed for the Santa Lucia celebration. At the end of the evening,

guests received Swedish cookies and a jar of lemon curd, home made from Charlotte's English family recipe. Guests were enchanted by the entertainment, which included a palm reader and a magician. Especially charming was a 60 second biographer, who created two page, keepsake "life stories" for each guest on an antique typewriter.

The evening, which raised significant funds for Old Westbury Gardens' preservation projects, is a real tribute to the efforts of both Lauren Knutsen and Lloyd Zuckerberg.



At left, from left, Ragnar Meyer-Knutsen, Lauren Stanton Knutsen, Charlotte Treifus and Lloyd Zuckerberg, above, from left, Gigi Sheldon with Joseph and Hanna Burns

Sam Mitchell's Legacy to Old Westbury Gardens

Sam Mitchell, a long time supporter of Old Westbury Gardens, passed away recently. Sam was a Quaker. His mother was Alice Underhill of Jericho, a prominent land owner. Sam's roots ran deep on Long Island, and were intertwined with those of the Gardens. He used to tell stories of how he worked at the Phipps Dairy Farm, baling hay for 15 cents a bale. He also sold eggs in his East Williston neighborhood, walking door to

door with his wagon behind him.

Sam was a regular at Picnic Pops. The beautiful great lawn was one of his favorite venues for seeing friends and enjoying music. Before Sam became ill, he discussed his intention to leave part of an insurance policy to be used for the long term care of the house and gardens. In December, Old Westbury Gardens received a check which was deposited into our endowment and will be used for "annual operating expenses in maintaining the gardens, and

capital projects associated with the preservation of the house and gardens."

Sam Mitchell was an original and his presence will be missed. But we are very grateful that he translated his love of Old Westbury Gardens into a tangible and valuable gift that will help sustain its beauty.

If you would like to consider making your own planned giving contribution to the Gardens, please call Doreen Banks.

Time for Tee

This year's Old Westbury Gardens Golf Tournament is on June 27. Join us at the Deepdale Golf Club for a welcoming brunch, and 18 challenging holes on a beautiful course, followed by a dinner reception. To ensure a superior golfing experience, the number of foursomes will be limited. Our chairman is Jack Foley. Our honorees are Kim and Payson

Coleman. In addition to being strong supporters of the Gardens and having made very generous annual appeal donations, the Colemans are accomplished golfers. Kim has participated in a number of Gardeners' Fairs and has worked on the Orchard Hill Showhouse Committee.

For more information, please contact Lisa Thornell at 516-333-0048, ext. 308.

Intern Program

Visitors have often asked how we manage to maintain the acres of lawns, trees, and plantings that make up Old Westbury Gardens. At the height of the spring when lawns need to be mowed, flowers require dead-heading, and the endless task of weeding has begun, I often wonder myself about how it will all get done. Fortunately, by mid-March each year, the cavalry arrives to save us in the form of our international horticultural interns.

The internship program at Old Westbury Gardens has really grown over the past decade, especially through the addition of the housing made available through the purchase of the Boegner property, enabling us to select five students each year from the many dozens of applications we receive.

We require that all prospective interns be recent graduates of or be enrolled in a college level program

for horticulture or other related plant science. We have hosted students with backgrounds in botany, agriculture, forestry, and soil science. Our interns have hailed from as far away as Indonesia and as close as Connecticut. We enjoy hosting an eclectic group each year, and 2011 is certainly no exception.

Andrea Toth is a student at the Cornivus University of Budapest, where she is working towards a degree in Landscape Protection and Reclamation.

Robert Tharby will be joining us from Sutton, England. He recently earned his degree in Horticulture from Merrist Wood College and has been interning at a private golf club in London.

Alessandra Camargo lives in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where she is working on her degree in Agriculture.

Pratitou Arafat will be the fifth intern we have hosted from the

Bogor University in Indonesia. Pratitou is pursuing a degree in Landscape Architecture.

Ekaterina Pak is a student at the Tomsk State University in Russia. She interned at the Siberian Botanical Garden and is looking to gaining further practical experience in the field of Horticulture.

Our program is funded through the generosity of donors who have taken a special interest in our gardens. We could not sustain the high level of grounds maintenance that we are known for without the help of these interns. Students interested in applying for our program should e-mail me, Maura McGoldrick, at mmcgoldrick@oldwestburygardens.org. Anyone interested in learning more about how they can contribute to our Horticultural Internship Fund should contact our Director of Development, Doreen Banks at dbanks@oldwestburygardens.org.

Westbury Honors One Of Old Westbury Gardens' Own

One of the more familiar of our green jacketed greeters of visitors to Westbury House over the last decade or so is Lawrence F. "Chip" Zaino, who has been working in Visitor Services since 1998. Chip, who has four children and seven grandchildren, is a lifelong resident of Westbury. A product of its school system, Chip went on to earn a degree in Accounting at St. John's University. Chip recently retired from the Westbury School District Board of Trustees at the age of 91. His 27 year voluntary tenure included service as Board President. He was especially appreciated for his accounting background and knowledge of budget preparation.

In a ceremony held on January 11, as a symbol of their appreciation, the District dedicated its Administration Building in Chip's honor.

Chip (seated), being honored at the District ceremony



The 2011 Gardeners' Fair

Rarely is there an opportunity to honor two people whose names are so synonymously linked with an organization. Carol and Jim Large are that special couple and Old Westbury Gardens is proud to honor them at the 2011 Gardeners' Fair. Sherri Grace and her energetic committee have planned a wonderful evening revolving around an especially appropriate theme for globe trekkers like Carol and Jim, "Adventures on the South Seas." The renowned event planner, Bruce Sutka of West Palm Beach, is designing an atmosphere befitting a Polynesian soiree. Catering is by Sterling Affair.

In 1997, Carol was elected President and CEO of Old Westbury Gardens, a position she held very energetically for ten years. To this day, as Vice-Chairman, Carol re-

mains enthusiastically involved in every opportunity or challenge facing Old Westbury Gardens. We are also indebted to Jim for lending his talent as a photographer and creating an extensive catalog of photos of the Gardens. His photographs have captured each garden in all seasons, providing an archive of the majesty, kaleidoscope of colors, and the ever changing vignettes to be found here.

As a couple, the Larges continue to be ambassadors of the Gardens. They attend all major events, support initiatives with major gifts, and have introduced friends, neighbors, and other visitors to Old Westbury Gardens.

We look forward to the Gardeners' Fair on May 21, when we can genuinely thank this remarkable couple for their tireless and joyful efforts in helping to maintain Old

Westbury Gardens as the world class historic house, gardens, and grounds that it is today.

For tickets, underwriting opportunities, or more information, please contact Lisa Thornell at 516-333-0048 ext. 308 or lthornell@oldwestburygardens.org



Carol and Jim Large

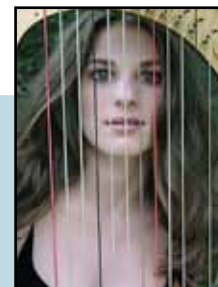
Funding

Old Westbury Gardens was delighted to receive \$15,500, our largest grant to date from the Wells Fargo Wachovia Foundation, for our Environmental Education Partnership with the Westbury School District. The grant will help the Gardens continue the wonderful work of Lisa Reichenberger, our Education Coordinator. This popular program utilizes the Gardens' natural resources as students learn concepts that are part of their normal academic curriculum. As indicated in a study conducted by the Pew Charitable Trust, this hands-on approach to environment education improves students' scores in math, science, and other subjects. To receive a copy of the study, please e-mail Doreen Banks at dbanks@oldwestburygardens.org.

As of 2010, Bank of America has

supported the Gardens with \$15,000 in funding. This includes a \$10,000 grant for the Education Partnership and through sponsorship of their Museums on Us program. Bofa account holders may visit the Gardens free of charge on the first weekend of every month. Frequently, account holders bring friends along, helping to introduce Old Westbury Gardens to people who might not otherwise visit us.

Another new source for our education funding is the Barker Welfare Foundation. Based in Chicago, the Barker Welfare foundation was founded by Catherine B. Hickox to provide initiatives that would improve "the quality of life, with an emphasis on strengthening youth and families." We are grateful to the Barker Welfare Foundation for their grant of \$6,000.



Harpist Bridget Kibbey (above) has captivated audiences with masterpieces and new works that stretch the bounds of her instrument. Reserve your seat in the Red Ballroom for May 14 as Bridget performs *Enter the Harp* with Poetica Musica, a program featuring music of Villa-Lobos, De Falla, Saint-Saens, and Stravinsky.

Francis Derwent Wood

By Lorraine Gilligan

Old Westbury Gardens is like a tranquil island, a bucolic environment that encourages visitors to shed the cares of the world for a brief interlude. In the past, as is unfortunately still the case today, many lives have been touched by volatile international developments and wars. One craftsman closely associated with the exquisite details of Westbury House was able to straddle the quest for beauty and perfection, and the misery of soldiers facially deformed by the horrors of World War I.

Francis Derwent Wood was a British sculptor frequently commissioned for portrait busts of the luminaries of the early 20th century and public monuments in England and Scotland. He was a close collaborator of Westbury House designer, George A. Crawley. Wood enriched Crawley's concepts for the Front Hall with an ornate chimneypiece and an elaborately carved wooden screen creating an archway over the main staircase. Both features are graced with reclining figures – a pair of cherubs (putti) representing the fleeting elements of time and fame and elegantly posed male and female figures inviting rest and rejuvenation in the bedroom suites on the second floor respectively. The monumental marble mantelpiece in the Dining Room portrays caryatids embodying the elements of classic beauty and calm. There is a feeling that all is perfection.

Wood also possessed a wicked sense of humor. He made quick caricatures of his illustrious colleagues at the Chelsea Arts Club in which their ordinary features were turned into parodies of themselves. That same ability, to deform faces, would grow into one of re-

storing them. Wood enlisted for service in World War I, but at age 44 was deemed too old for the trenches. Performing mundane tasks at the home front, he realized that he could use his skills as a sculptor to help restore facial features plastic surgeons were unable to refine. He said, "My work begins where the work of the surgeon is completed." Based on pre-war photos of his subjects, Wood created light weight metal masks that could replicate features where half a face was missing. The masks were attached to the soldier's head much like a pair of glasses that hook over the ears. The masks certainly had their limitations – there were no movable parts, they became uncomfortably hot, and could be dented. The process of creating the correct facial profile and fitting was an uncomfortable procedure. But with great compassion Wood commented, "My cases are generally extreme cases that plastic surgery has, perforce, had to abandon; but as in plastic surgery, the psychological effect is the same. The patient acquires his old self-respect..."

(With thanks to the Smithsonian Magazine article Faces of War, February 2007)



The Front Hall chimney piece



Blue Star Museum

Old Westbury Gardens is proud to announce our participation in the 2011 Blue Star Museum Program. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the military family support group Blue Star Families, this partnership includes over 900 museums all over the country. From May 27 through September 5, free admission will be extended to active duty military personnel and members of their immediate families.

Scouts at the Gardens

By Lisa Reichenberger

“I will do my best to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, and to respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.”

Hark back to a time when life was just this straightforward, when there was an ease about people, and an effortless courtesy that flowed day to day. If only the world were still so simple...Old Westbury Gardens is happy to report, it is!

The words of the Girl Scout law echo in the ears of women across a multitude of generations. Many girls, be they artistic souls, history buffs or nature types, discover

something rare and empowering within themselves as Girl Scouts. Old Westbury Gardens strives to preserve this great tradition of women and the outdoors. The Girl Scouts of today are more hands-on than ever, unraveling the history



Lisa with her scouts

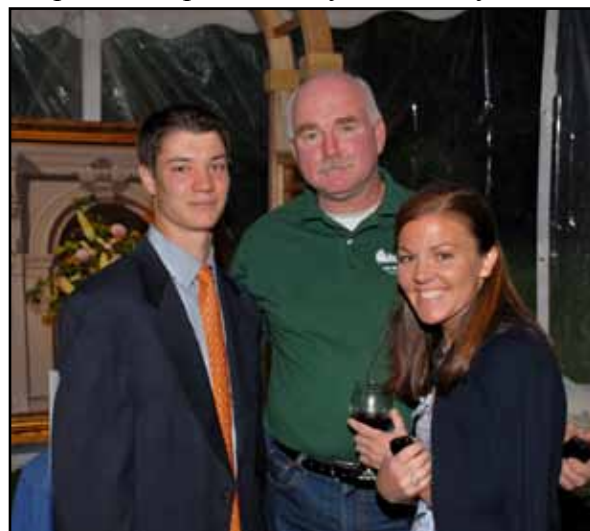
and mystery our walls and woodlands possess. Whether focusing on the distinctions between styles of the visual arts or experiencing a fresh approach to flower beds, the girls are very interested and fully engaged in providing innovative concepts on almost everything Old Westbury Gardens has to offer.

Hundreds of Girl Scouts visit the Gardens annually for special events, private tours, and volunteer opportunities. Troops are composed of unique casts of characters that share a common thread of respect for others and the earth. Their presence is felt through their actions reflecting that time-honored principle of scouting excellence. It is a refreshing sight that leaves even this retired scout at Old Westbury Gardens confident that a future of preservation, both historic and environmental, will be left in very capable hands.

Ed Ryan

With great regret, Old Westbury Gardens recently announced the death of one of our longtime employees, Edmund Ryan. Ed, who was a Gardens' Mechanic in our Operations Department, passed away on January 27 at the age of 60 following a battle with pancreatic cancer.

Ed was always ready with a story, a joke, or some other means of making everyone smile. Along with that energy and engaging personality there came a great deal of knowledge and talent. Ever since he began working here in June of 1996, and despite the challenges of a tight budget, Ed excelled at managing to maintain each and every car, van, truck, or mechanical device on wheels used at Old Westbury Gardens. After hours, it was not unusual to find Ed lending automotive advice and often a helping hand, to virtually anyone who had a car problem. Ed also worked on his own vehicles at his home in North Babylon. Once, several years ago, he made a little money from selling one of his trucks. Although totally unrelated to his work here, Ed decided to “share the wealth” as he put it, and funded a pizza lunch for his fellow Gardens' employees. Ed was one of a kind, and he will be missed.



Ed (center) at the Gardeners' Fair with fellow employees Tom Cross and Maura (McGoldrick) Brush

Behind the Garden Wall

By Kim Johnson

I'm often asked about what I do here in the winter. Despite a common fantasy that gardeners escape to warmer areas not to return till serious work is to be done, such is not the case. Winter is the prime time to do the serious planning on what unfolds throughout the rest of the year. Careful planning and scheduling plant material carries out the long succession of flowering borders of the Walled Garden.

While the garden is continually evolving, there are four major seasonal changes in the Walled Garden borders. Early to late spring is our bulb and spring annual show. Beginning in late May throughout June, the garden goes into high gear with many colorful perennials, biennials and stunning roses. Meanwhile, under foot, border change outs are occurring. The bulbs are removed and an extensive group of summer annuals are planted, mostly in the front of the borders, livening up the summer show. In September, some of those very same summer annuals get changed out and a wide array of Chrysanthemums get planted in their place to begin the long colorful fall display.

Though many summer perennials bloom in the Walled Garden, there still can be a lack of color in the flower borders. To compensate, we intentionally sow some taller summer annuals in the greenhouses for planting later in the summer and to fill in any gaps that may occur. We use many season extending tricks to keep the display as showy as possible by adding both flower color and height.

After the removal of spring bulbs, our large collection of Dahlia tubers are planted behind all of the borders. The Dahlias, which grow as high as seven feet, pair nicely with the Glory Bushes (*Tibouchina*). The Glory Bushes/Princess Flowers are woody plants native to Brazil, and are not hardy in our area. We train our plants into upwards 4' shrubs. They are dug up each year, repotted, and overwintered in a cool greenhouse. Starting in June, we pull them out and plant them among the Dahlias in the back of some of the borders. *Tibouchinas* are wonderful plants that produce flowers in a beautiful purple color that intensifies as the nights get cooler. In mid July, different colors of tall Zinnias provide additional height

and color repetition down the borders. Stand at the top of the steps leading down to the lower garden in late summer and notice how the hot pink of Zinnia 'Ruffles Cherry' creates punctuation marks all the way down to the Lotus Pool.

Many varieties of Salvias have become invaluable additions to the borders. The taller Salvias are tender perennials (there are perennial Salvias that flower earlier), and are unable to overwinter on Long Island. Our greenhouse staff holds onto stock plants such as 'Indigo Spires,' takes cuttings, and propagates them for the following season. By July, when most of the Delphiniums planted in front of the roses have finished blooming, 'Indigo Spires' are planted among the finished plants. The lanky plants grow as tall as five feet, and help keep the garden flowering strongly right until the last frost.

After the Hollyhocks are done flowering, Sunflowers are planted in the same areas in late July. This late sowing ensures that the plants will last well into fall.



When Foxglove and *Anchusa* have started to wane, *Agastache* (Hyssop), *Cleome* (Spider Flower), and *Verbena bonariensis* (tall Verbena) are woven around finished plants to continue on in their place. *Abelmoschus* (Sunset hibiscus) and taller *Nicotianas* (Flowering tobacco) replace perennials such as *Veronicastrum* and *Helenium*. As added insurance, we pot up extra plants of certain annuals that grow well in large pots. Come fall, if something isn't doing well or needs spiffing up, we can slip more plants in when necessary.

With keen planning and timing of seeding and planting, home gardeners can also add seasonal extenders to flower designs, ensuring the pleasure of enjoying your gardens longer.

Thursday Group

Tending an area as large as the Walled Garden requires many hands. During the demanding planting season, it takes a small garden village. We are fortunate to have the services of a team of 14 dedicated horticulture volunteers who work with us throughout each week. But I especially wish to acknowledge some people who have been with us for many years,

our Thursday group: Herbert Coles, Gladys Korchinski, Gus Tastanis, Mary Ann Damo, and David Schmidt. At any given time, these interesting individuals may be doing anything from traveling to every continent on the globe to sharing their musical talents with local Long Island audiences through performing in concerts. But despite their busy schedules, they always manage to put aside some volunteering time. The



Walled Garden benefits not just through their gardening skills, but from the atmosphere they help create with their enthusiasm, personalities, and their humorous insights on the state of the world.



Taste of Spring

Enjoy a beautiful evening on the South Terrace of Westbury House. This year's Taste of Spring (a Members Only event) is on Saturday evening, April 30. Contact Jana Ryan no later than April 20 for registration, 516-333-0038, jryan@oldwestburygardens.org.

Plant Sale, April 29-May 1

We have tried over the years to provide our visitors with plants that are difficult to find in local nurseries. From **Sweet Peas** and **Delphiniums** to **Sweet William** and **Mockorange**, we have many of your grandmother's favorites that other growers have forgotten about!

Sweet Peas have become particularly popular, and we have expanded our selection for this spring. The **'Royal Family Crimson' Sweet Pea** is especially fragrant and more heat tolerant than many of its relatives. You can enjoy its blossoms in the garden or in a vase for most of the summer.

Two old-time favorites from the Walled Garden are **Delphiniums** and **Foxgloves**. The show stopping hues of **Delphiniums** are among the very few true blues in the flower world. Both flowers will be available to our customers in limited quantities.

Our highlighted cottage annual this year is **"Venus' Looking Glass."** Violet-blue star-shaped flowers are borne on this 6-12" annual from summer until fall. It can be grown in full sun or partial shade. We will also have **Love-in-a-Puff**, **Cosmos**, **Amaranth**, and **Nas-**

turtium for those nostalgic gardeners who are looking for a more romantic and old-fashioned border.

As always we will be offering wide choices of perennials for both sun and shade gardens with an emphasis on the reliable but less common garden selections. We have also expanded our groups of vines and small shrubs. Members of our horticulture staff will be on hand to aid you with your selections. New this year, we will also offer free potting for anyone purchasing twenty-five dollars or more at the shop. Bring your empty pots and allow us to put together combinations of shade or sun plants that will provide interest all summer long.

Members shopping on April 29-May 1 are entitled to your usual 10 percent off. But try to visit on April 28 for our Members' Preview Sale and take advantage of a special 20% discount.



Delphinium in the Walled Garden

Quirks of Fate

By Vince Kish

Old Westbury Gardens has been open to the public since 1959 primarily through the efforts of our founder, Peggie Phipps Boegner. This property is the former estate of Peggie's parents, John S. (Jay) Phipps and Margarita Grace Phipps. Jay's father was Henry (Harry) Phipps Jr. Margarita's father was Michael P. Grace. Her uncle was William Russell (W.R.) Grace. Most of our members know all this. However, when we delve deeper into the background behind the history of the Gardens, some fascinating quirks of fate arise regarding the families, steel, City Hall, entrance gates, and a few other things.



W.R. Grace

Close Quarters

Harry Phipps grew up at 336 Rebecca Street in Allegheny, Pennsylvania. His next door neighbor at number 338 was Andrew Carnegie. Many years later, after having spent decades as business partners

in the steel business, the lifelong friends would become neighbors again along Manhattan's Fifth Ave. Carnegie lived at 90th Street. Built in 1903, the mansion was the first American residence with a frame made from steel. Phipps would move to within a few blocks at 87th Street. Another steel partner, Henry Clay Frick, arrived nearby on 70th Street. Today, all three homes (or at least part of his home in Harry's case) live on as museums. Frick's home houses a fine art collection. Although Harry's building was razed in 1927, the elegant dining room was saved, moved to Long Island, and added to Westbury House.

In New York City in the 1880's, mayors were elected to terms of two years. Edward Cooper, son of industrialist and Cooper Union founder Peter Cooper, served from 1879-1880. Abram Hewitt, his close friend and brother-in-law (he married Edward's sister Sarah Cooper) was elected mayor in 1887-1888. Abram's daughters, Amy, Eleanor, and Sarah Hewitt, would found the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, which would eventually be located in the former mansion of Andrew Carnegie. One of the other mayors during that decade was W. R. Grace who held two non-consecutive terms, 1881-1882, and 1885-1886.

Abbey Road to Old Westbury Road

In the 1530's, King Henry VIII demanded a Dissolution of the Monasteries. Thereby, most properties in England that still have the word "abbey" in their names have actually been private residences for at

least a few centuries. Such is the case with Battle Abbey in Sussex and Combermere Abbey in Shropshire. Michael Grace rented Battle Abbey for 21 years beginning in 1903. Among the many regular visitors were Michael's daughter Margarita and son-in-law Jay Phipps. Impressed by the grounds, the young couple was inspired to replicate several Battle Abbey elements, including the Rose Garden and the Ghost Walk, at the English country-style estate they were having built in Old Westbury between 1904 and 1906.

Circa 1730, the English blacksmith Robert Bakewell designed a beautiful set of majestic, wrought iron gates for the Combermere Abbey estate, which at the time was owned by Sir Robert Stapleton Cotton. By the 20th century, Cotton's descendants had fallen on hard times (relatively speaking). Scrapped for funds to pay considerable debts, Francis, 4th Viscount of Combermere, had an estate sale in 1919, which included the purchase of the Bakewell gates by landscape designer George Crawley, who shipped them to Long Island to be installed at 71 Old Westbury Road, the entrance of the estate of his client, Jay Phipps. Later that year, the entire Combermere property was sold to Sir Kenneth Crossley.

Taking Liberty

In 2005, following over 85 years of wear, tear, and a few unfortunate run-ins by cars and trucks, the Old Westbury Gardens wrought iron entrance gates underwent major repairs by a company named Les Métalliers Champenois in

New Jersey. Among other things, LMC restored the Conservatory at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. But they are perhaps best known for rebuilding the torch held by the Statue of Liberty. The mayor of New York who accepted the Statue of Liberty as a gift from France in 1886 was W. R. Grace.

There are no longer any plants that manufacture wrought iron (other than small batches created through recycling old material for restoration purposes). Ornate gates, furniture, or just about anything that may have been made from wrought iron at one time is now made from steel.

Estates and Real Estate

Battle Abbey is presently administered by English Heritage, and is open to the public. Combermere Abbey, still privately held, is owned by Sarah Callander Beckett, the great granddaughter of



Sir Kenneth Crossley. Much like Old Westbury Gardens, Combermere hosts concerts, garden tours, weddings, lectures, and various other events throughout the year. Though now the lady of the manor, in her younger days, Sarah lived

in Manhattan for a few years. Not surprisingly, she had a great interest in historical preservation, which included regularly making calls to a real estate development company that was managing a number of building renovations on the Upper West Side. Among the people she would talk to was the office manager, Carol Gibson-Kish. Carol is my wife.

During a trip to the NYC area later this spring, Sarah Beckett will be touring Old Westbury Gardens, including seeing the Combermere gates for the first time.



Above left, the Old Westbury Gardens entrance gates, left, Combermere Abbey

From PR Vault

This trip way down memory lane gives us a feeling for how Old Westbury Gardens was promoted to the public about 50 years ago. Direct mail flyers and other literature from that time indicate that our PO Box was number 67 (it's now number 430) and that zip codes were not yet in use. Though our main phone number has not changed in all this time, back then it was referenced as ED3-0048.



THE CHILDREN'S COTTAGE GARDEN AT LONG ISLAND'S OLD WESTBURY GARDENS



The Walled Italian Garden at Tuliptime.



The Manor House seen from the Children's Cottage Garden.

THIS MAGNIFICENT photograph featured as the Eastman Kodak Colorama in Grand Central Terminal during the month of March also served as the inspiration for the Eastman Kodak "Child's Garden"—the largest single exhibit—at the 46th International Flower Show in the New York Coliseum.

Old Westbury Gardens, the former John S. Phipps estate located in Old Westbury, N.Y., just off the Long Island Expressway (Guinea Woods Road South exit) is a 70 acre showplace, open to the public Wednesday through Sunday—and all holidays—each week from early May to late October. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thousands of flowers in formal and informal gardens, handsome specimen trees, woodland paths, lakes and ponds dot the gently rolling lawns. The estate, built in 1906 by the late Mr. Phipps, is patterned after the Great English Parks and is centered around the handsome Manor House that in itself is a museum of art treasures, antiques and decor. Westbury House is also open to the public.

For complete information, write: Old Westbury Gardens, Old Westbury, N.Y., or phone Area Code 516-ED 3-0048.

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Donations to both funds have been received from April, 2010 through February,
2011 in memory of the individuals as follows:

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