

THE CASWELL HORTICULTURE CLUB



January 2011 Newsletter

The world needs dreamers and the world needs doers. But above all, the world needs dreamers who do. ~Sarah Ban Breathnach

On January 6th at 10:30 a.m. we will take down our Christmas decorations. This will be our January meeting.

Our February meeting, location to be announced, will be a planning meeting. Ideas for programs or field trips are welcomed, and necessary, to provide something for everyone, so come prepared if you have a program suggestion. We'd like everyone to serve in some capacity, so please volunteer for a committee.

Looking Back

Being familiar with home gardening we know that change is inevitable. Plants die, are damaged by storms, people or animals, don't live up to expectations, or for whatever reason, need to be replaced.

Building and helping to maintain the Veterans Square, the Memorial Garden, the Courtyard Garden, the Walks, the Alley and the Caswell Community Arboretum has taxed our resources and energy, but has enhanced the appearance of the center of Yanceyville beyond our vision when we first became a club in 1997. Our membership has grown to include men, who bring skills, perspectives, and diversity that has enhanced the club and made it stronger.

Throughout our existence as a club we have tackled the county property in the Town of Yanceyville for the simple fact that it is our county seat. It will be visited by most, if not all, of the approximately 23,500 people that make Caswell County their home. We have been aided by the Town of Yanceyville, Caswell County, the Dan River Work Farm, the Extension Service, the USDA, the NC Forest Service, NC Wildlife Commission and a host of businesses and individual volunteers, including our spouses and family! We could not have done it on our own, but we have proven ourselves to be leaders in this effort.

We have hosted, along with the Yancey House, three splendid educational seminars that have been well-received and attended, even though the attendants were mostly non-residents of Caswell County. We donated flowers from our own gardens and assisted in arranging them for a couple of weddings, and we gave away 3-year old tree saplings, free of charge, to citizens in Yanceyville, hoping that they would plant them. We gave the Town of Milton three fiberglass planters. They are placed in front of the Thomas Day Tavern and are kept watered and planted.

People have wondered what we get out of such effort. For me, it is a sense of pride. I'm happy to say that I'm a part of such a fine group of people that truly care enough to give so much energy, financial support, and insight. I'm proud of our accomplishments, and quick to take credit, on our behalf, when I hear positive remarks on the appearance of "downtown Yanceyville". I have also witnessed a renewed interest in landscaping efforts in people's homes and their businesses, and for a couple in Yanceyville I know we provided the inspiration. For an organization to remain active, its members need to get something in return for their efforts. I hope that you too share my sense of pride and esprit de corps.

I send everyone all the best wishes for a healthy, happy and peaceful 2011!

Yancey

Remember when?



The Caswell Community Arboretum

2006 - The Dan River Work Farm inmates spreading mulch in the early days of the arboretum. Look at the newly planted wax myrtles!

Above photo courtesy of Yancey Smith



The Veterans Square Before

The absence of the fence, the small boxwood shrub between the monument, and the two huge maple trees date this photo.



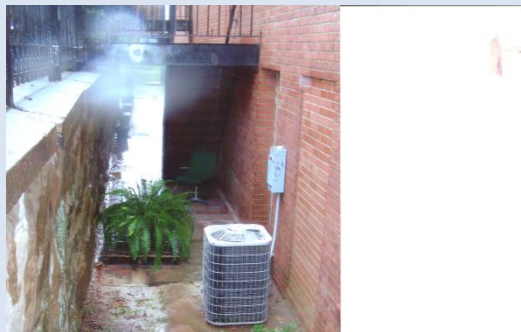
The Memorial Garden

The morning of planting the parterres. The Nellie R. Stevens hollies were planted earlier.



The Courtyard Garden

Laying the brick and before the plantings.



The Alley

Before the paving and improvements.

Above photos courtesy of Pat Ewalt

A Look Forward

In the mid-16th Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim, a Swiss professor of medicine published the *Doctrine of Signatures*. He later Latinized his name to Paracelus. He described plants and how to decipher their signatures, or “labels”. According to that publication, plants resemble the parts of humans for which they have medicinal uses. For example, he wrote, that the delicate leaves “tresses” of the maidenhair fern would cure baldness. Flowers and roots also suggested cures: bloodroot for blood ailments, snakeroot for snakebite, and toothwort flowers (wort means plant, usually in combination with another word) to relieve toothache. The common name for Pulmonaria is lungwort. The telltale signature is the speckled leaf which resembles lung diseases. Our medicine cabinets probably have plant derived medicines in it today.

In the 21st Century the technology to identify plants using DNA barcoding will be in our future. Scientists predict that within the next few years we will be able to have a small hand-held device that, in combination with our smart phone, will scan the DNA of a plant and identify it! The “old” system of identifying plants using morphology can be replaced or enhanced. It will be something marvelous if it will pronounce the Latin names!

What does the future hold for the CHC?

From the Members

Four years ago my husband and I escaped to Caswell County from the DC area. It was our hope to find a quieter, more peaceful place to live – a place we could plant and grow a garden (or rather I could).

My sister, Pauline, who is an excellent gardener, has a yard which is a thing of beauty. This made me think that I could also master the art. Well, after two years of pulling weeds in the unforgiving heat of a Carolina summer I decided I could use some expert advice so I joined the

Horticulture Society. Sadly, after two years in the Society I find that this is not, nor will ever be an area of expertise for me.

But I have discovered that I love to watch the rebirth of my garden each year, I will go to extremes to protect any plant I have put into the ground myself and I don't care if I know the scientific name of a plant or any plant for that matter. I know now that crape myrtles should be trimmed in January (much to my chagrin) and herbs taste so much better when picked right outside my back door. I have seen the beauty of Southern Highlands Reserve and have watched the Arboretum, a blank canvas, being transformed into fine art.

I appreciate that I will never be as well informed as others, or anyone in the Society about gardening. But here's the thing, it's okay that I'm not, because all I have to do is pick up the phone or type a quick email and someone will happily answer my question(s). I have learned all these things and more because I joined the Society and gained an endless supply of knowledge through friendship – and to my way of thinking this makes me an expert! *Barbara Berger*

The Sullivan Woods located at Twin Lakes in Burlington is described as their Botanical Garden. It contains native plants that are numbered and a master sheet is available to assist in matching the numbers with the plant. Sullivan Woods is offered as a suggestion for a field trip in 2011. *Lib McPherson*

This is my response to your request for member input and I humbly put forth the following: We need funds for “heavy” help. Perhaps we should do a number of projects that added together make big money or at least “biggish”. These could involve new things - luncheons, dinners and especially brunches! With “idea” booths that educate, stimulate and sell things. Those members who can't help, as once they did, might appreciate this second area of service in the club. *Jan Duckett*

Note: The above responses were the only ones I received. I know it was a busy time, so bring any you have to the February meeting. I had to get this newsletter out to everyone in order to let you know when we need to be at the Square for removing the Christmas Decorations.

“To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves.”

Mahatma Gandhi