

THE MORRIS ARBORETUM

ALSO

*THE CHESNUT HILL
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY*

AND

*"GREAT AND HISTORIC TREES
OF PHILADELPHIA COUNTY*

1968

HORTICULTURE AT CHESTNUT HILL

Stephen Ager Reads History of
Flower Growers' Society Since
Its Origin in 1898.

MANY SUCCESSFUL SHOWS

The feature of the February meeting of the Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society, held on Tuesday evening in Library Hall, Chestnut Hill, was the reading of a history of the society, which the secretary, Stephen Ager, had prepared.

There was a large attendance at the meeting. Premiums were awarded as follows: Cyclamens, first to Mrs. John Lowber Welsh, gardener, John Little; second, James Cheston, gardener, William Cheneskey; three heads of May King lettuce, first, James Cheston.

Mr. Ager's paper follows:

The Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society was organized in November, 1898, a meeting being called by Charles A. Knapp, who then took the chair. Wil-

Tuesday, September 12, in the Christian Hall Library Building, and there was a display of dahlias, fruit and vegetables. Stuart Patterson had kindly offered premiums for dahlias and John R. Morris, president of the society, and Mrs. Patterson competed for the dahlia prize. The competition was so keen and close that the judges had to decide to award both competitors first awards. The sixth annual exhibition was held in November of this year in Joslin's Hall. Music was provided. The exhibits were many and very meritorious.

In January, 1906, John R. Morris was again re-elected president; Edwin J. Day secretary and James Bell treasurer. The books showed a balance of \$74.22. The regular monthly meetings of this year were well attended. Numerous shows were held. The spring show and dahlia show were especially attractive. Papers on the cultivation of various subjects were read and a notable address was given by the president, John R. Morris, the subject being "Tree Planting," which proved very interesting and instructive. In November of this year the society held its seventh annual exhibition at Joslin's Hall. The show proved excellent in every way and showed a steady growth from the previous year. John R. Morris resigned from



STEPHEN AGER

Who read a history of the Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society.

liam Boyer was elected president, Robert Carey, secretary, and Charles A. Knapp treasurer. At this first meeting there were thirteen present. In this first year of the society, monthly meetings were held and a few premiums offered by the society were competed for.

On January 1, 1899, J. R. Morris was elected president; William H. Houston treasurer and Robert Carey, secretary. Monthly meetings were held through the season, and the first fall show was held in Joslin's Hall in November. This exhibition of chrysanthemums, foliage plants, etc., was a decided success.



CHARLES A. KNAPP

Founder of the Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society.

the presidency of the society at the close of the year. Many heartfelt thanks were extended to him for his kind and valuable services rendered the society.

In January, 1907, Murray Bohlen was elected president, Edwin J. Day secretary and James Bell treasurer. The books at this time showed a balance of \$97.27. The monthly meetings were held in the Christian Hall Library and premiums were offered and competed for at each meeting. The spring show was specially good, and there was a large attendance of visitors. On October 8 the society held a dahlia show in Masonic Hall.

In January, 1900, the officers were re-elected. Monthly meetings were well attended and the second annual exhibition of the society was held in Joslin's Hall in November. The show was well attended and showed a marked improvement on the previous fall show.

In January, 1901, John R. Morris was re-elected president, John Marsden was elected secretary and William H. Houston treasurer. At the monthly meetings held this year the society offered many premiums, the exhibit being very creditable and competition for the prizes good. A special feature introduced at this time were the many interesting and instructive papers that were read. These lectures were given at the suggestion of the president, John R. Morris, by members of the society.

In October of this year, William Knapp stated at the meeting that Joslin's Hall would not be large enough to accommodate the many exhibitors expected to exhibit at the November show, and the casino building, Chestnut Hill Park, was rented for the fall show. The exhibits were very good, but owing to the extra expense the society was put to in having to provide canvas to enclose the casino building, the society was financially embarrassed.

On January, 1902, John R. Morris was re-elected president, John Marsden secretary and William H. Houston, treasurer. Many fine shows were held at the monthly meetings. Interesting and instructive papers were read and through the generosity of the president the papers were printed in pamphlet form and circulated for the benefit of all. Through the efforts of the late John T. Hartman a sufficient sum was raised to enable the society to pay the premiums offered.

In January, 1903, the books of the society showed a balance of \$12.52. John R. Morris re-elected president, William P. Clarke secretary, Robert Carey financial secretary, Frank Gould treasurer. The monthly meetings were well attended during the season. Premiums were offered and competed for, and on November 17, 1903, the society held its first flower show in the Christian Hall Library Building. This exhibition proved to be a great success and was well attended. The society in this year offered prizes to cottagers and the school children to encourage those who had a love of flowers, giving them free packets of seeds.

In January, 1904, John R. Morris was re-elected president, William F. Clarke secretary, and Frank Gould treasurer. Monthly meetings were held and interesting and instructive lectures given. Fine monthly flower shows were held. The many exhibits of fruit, flowers and vegetables at each show proved an attraction. The society held its fifth annual exhibition in November, 1904, and had over one hundred exhibits of great excellence. Through the generosity of many ladies and gentlemen the society was enabled to give free admission to the show. Music was provided on both evenings under the direction of Harry M. Staton. This added much to the enjoyment of the visitors, who in great numbers attended the exhibition. Charles Knapp occupied a big space in the hall with palms, ferns and carnation from the Mermaid greenhouses, and Mrs. John White Geary took first honors for twelve varieties of cut chrysanthemums. Through the efforts of Charles A. Knapp and James Bell, who solicited contributions to the amount of \$40 the society was able to pay all premiums satisfactory.

In January, 1905, the treasurer reported having a balance on his books of \$33.07. A notable spring show of this year was held in the Christian Hall Library Building. Many beautiful flowering bulbs were exhibited and a strong display was made of fruit and vegetables. A paper was read on the "Cultivation of Mignonette under Glass." There was a good attendance

THE GERMANTOWN

INDEPENDENT-GAZETTE

FEBRUARY 1912

In January, 1908, Murray Bohlen was re-elected president, Edwin J. Day secretary and James Bell treasurer. The books at this time showed a balance of \$97.75. The society held its regular monthly meetings at the Christian Hall Library Building. Many valuable papers were read and monthly flower shows were held. The spring show of this year was held in Masonic Hall on April 14, and proved to be a great success, and on October 8 at Masonic Hall the society held its dahlia show. This exhibition proved to be one of the finest dahlia shows the society had ever held.

The society held its ninth annual exhibition in Joslin's Hall, November 7 and 8. There were 176 entries; 73 first prizes were awarded; 40 second prizes, and one third prize. The prize money amounting to \$168. The show was well attended.

In January, 1909, Murray Bohlen was re-elected president, Edwin J. Day secretary, and Charles Bustard treasurer. The books in January of this year showed a balance of \$89.67. The monthly meetings were held in the Christian Hall Library Building. Premiums were offered at each meeting for fruit, flowers and vegetables. The meetings were well attended and the exhibits were meritorious. Instructive papers were also read by members of the society. The spring show held in April and the dahlia show held on September 14 in the library building were both very creditable to the society and showed a marked improvement on the previous year's exhibit. The tenth annual exhibition was held in Joslin's Hall and it was the general opinion that the exhibitions were superior to the previous year. The exhibits were of great excellence and the show was declared to be a great success.

In January, 1910, Murray Bohlen was again re-elected president, Edwin J. Day secretary and Charles Bustard treasurer. The books at this time showed a balance of \$135.73. The society held its monthly meetings in Christian Hall Library Building. Charles Knapp read a paper on "Landscape Work" and dealt with the subject in an able manner, which was much appreciated. The spring show was held March 22, when Mrs. John White Geary secured six highest awards for a very fine group of spring flowering bulbs and foliage plants, massed for effect, and for specimen pans of tulips, hyacinths and narcissus. Mrs. John Lowber Welsh also placed an effective group of flowering bulbs and plants and was also awarded first for Roman hyacinths and first for the best fern—*Nephrolepis Scholizii*. On May 26 a notable peony show was held. Walter E. Rex secured highest award, Mrs. W. A. Dick was awarded first prize for three white and first prize for three red. Mrs. John White Geary was awarded first prize for three best blooms of pink and received

special mention for a fine display of cut roses and poppies. This peony show was well attended and much appreciated by visitors.

Many interesting and instructive papers were read during the season by members of the society. A sweet pea exhibition was given and the annual dahlia show was held. Both exhibitions proved to be excellent and were much enjoyed by the visitors. The eleventh annual chrysanthemum exhibition was held in Joslin's Hall, November 3 and 4. The exhibition proved to be one of the best the society had held for many years; there were 165 entries in competition. Fifty-three first prizes were awarded and 35 second prizes. Music was provided both evenings of the show, and the large attend-

ance of visitors appreciated viewing the masses of fine blooms and the artistic manner in which the groups of flowering and foliage plants were arranged. At the end of this year, 1910, the societies books showed a balance of \$199.64.

In January, 1911, Murray Bohlen was re-elected president, Edwin J. Day secretary and Charles Bustard treasurer. The monthly meetings were held in the Christian Hall Library Building. Premiums were offered at each meeting and creditable shows were held. The spring show proved an especial attraction and was altogether a great success. The sweet pea exhibition was really a surprise, for every tint of this popular flower could be seen in large masses. The dahlia show showed a marked increase on the previous year's exhibit, the flowers being especially large and many new varieties were shown.

The society held its twelfth annual exhibition in the casino building, Chestnut Hill Park, November 1 and 2. This exhibition proved to be unprecedented in the history of the society. The exhibits were more numerous and of better quality. The society owes its thanks to Mrs. Willis Martin, Mrs. W. A. Dick and Mrs. John White Geary and ladies of the Garden Society for their valuable advice and kind help in making the show the great success it proved to be. Mrs. Martin provided green bunting, and at her suggestion the tables were covered with the material. The cut flowers were staged under her direction and made a pleasing effect. Music was provided on each evening and the attendance was the largest known in the history of the society.

The treasurer's report for the year 1911 showed \$286.57 in the treasury.

In January, 1912, John White Geary was elected president, Stephen Ager secretary and Charles Bustard was re-elected treasurer. At a meeting held in the Christian Hall Library Building January 9, the retiring secretary, Edwin J. Day, was accorded a rising vote of thanks for his valuable services rendered the association in the many past years, and his name was enrolled on the books as an honorary life member. An exhibition was held at this meeting, which proved to be a success. Mrs. John White Geary was awarded first prize for a fine begonia grown in a five-inch pot.

In reviewing the records of the Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society since its organization in 1898 to the present year, one finds a great spirit of perseverance shown by the associates of the society, from the first to the last. Charles A. Knapp we find called the first meeting fourteen years ago, and to-day is a very active member. Too much cannot be said in commendation of the band of men whose names we find through the records, that have worked with untiring energy through many years, and, though they at times were financially embarrassed, they overcame difficulties by their perseverance and brought the society up to the present high standard of efficiency we find it to-day.

The beginning of this year 1912, is undoubtedly a forerunner of successful years to come. The society is fortunate in having as its president John White Geary, and the kind assistance from the ladies of the Garden Society.

Mrs. Martin

GROWS "WALL ORCHARD"

Early Peaches Produced at Chestnut Hill on Trees Trained on Wires, While Dwarf Apple Trees Also Yield a Remarkable Crop

The following description of the "wall orchard" of Henry A. Laughlin, of Chestnut Hill, is from the Philadelphia Record:

On Mr. Laughlin's estate, near Credefield street, peaches of the most luscious variety are ready to be picked six weeks before the orchards of his neighbors show ripe fruit. His apples appear on his trees three years after the trees are set out and are extra large and of a rare color.

Mr. Laughlin's orchard is designed after a plan popular in England and is under the care of Stephen Ager. Before each tree is planted a large block of concrete is placed in the bottom of the hole, three feet below the surface of the ground. Over this slab, and not more than four inches below the surface, are planted the trees. In setting out the trees care is always taken to plant them close to the wall. Wires are stretched up the wall, which is ten feet high, and the branches of the trees are trained to spread over these wires. Projecting from the top of the wall and over the trees is a small glass shelter, two feet wide. In the cold days of the spring, when the frost is nipping the fruit buds, a curtain is spread from the glass roof to the ground, and by this care fruit is obtained six weeks before it is ripe elsewhere in the neighborhood. The function of the concrete block is to prevent the roots from spreading too far into the ground. Every three years a trench is dug around the edge of the

block and the roots trimmed. By this method the roots are restricted to the area over the block and prevented spreading and dissipating the strength of the tree in the ground.

Mr. Laughlin grows apples by the Espalier method. English-dwarf apple trees are planted beneath a wire fence five feet high, and their branches are trained over it. In planting the trees he grafts the dwarf shoots on Paradise stock. This method yields beautiful fruit, of large size and even color.

HORTICULTURISTS' ELECTION.

1913
Chestnut Hill Society. Makes Few Changes in the List of Officers.

In the election of officers at the monthly meeting of the Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society, on Tuesday evening, in the hall of the public library, at Chestnut Hill, few changes were made in the list of officers. The following were chosen:

President, John White Geary.

Vice presidents, Dr. George Woodward, John Marsden, Fred Michell, Sr., John S. Hay, Joseph Elias, John Story Jenks, Jr., and Charles A. Knapp.

Honorary vice presidents—Mrs. Andrew A. Blair, Mrs. J. S. Clark, Mrs. C. Stuart Patterson, Mrs. George Willing, Jr., Mrs. J. S. Willis Martin, Mrs. W. A. Dick, Mrs. Henry A. Laughlin, Mrs. R. H. Bayard Bowie, Mrs. Edward R. Laughlin, Mrs. Samuel Goodman, Jr., Mrs. John White Geary, Mrs. J. L. Welsh, Mrs. Charles M. Welsh, Mrs. J. J. Henry, Mrs. J. Arthur Lea, Mrs. Francis T. Gowen, Mrs. John S. Jenks, Jr., and Mrs. G. L. Harrison.

Secretary, Stephen Ager.

Treasurer, Charles Bustard.

Executive committee — James Bell, John Little, James Bustard, John Rigney, Charles A. Knapp, James Williams, William Cheneskey and James Ward.

An exhibition of carnations and roses was the feature of the evening.

THE GERMAINTOWN

INDEPENDENT-GAZETTE

1913

ENGLISH GARDENER'S SUCCESS.

Stephen Ager Has Charge of Extensive Grounds at Chestnut Hill.

Stephen Ager, of Crefeld street, Chestnut Hill, chief gardener for Henry A. Laughlin, of Chestnut avenue, celebrated his 43rd birthday today.

He was born in London, England, on June 12, 1871, and in his boyhood showed a natural taste for landscape



STEPHEN AGER.

engineering and horticulture. He was educated at Kew, after which he became gardener to Sir James Clark, of England.

In the spring of 1905 Mr. Ager was sent to this country to rebuild a garden in Boston, Mass., after the English plans. After the work had been completed he decided to stay in this country, and in 1909 he took charge of the grounds of Henry A. Laughlin. The fruit garden on this estate is one of Mr. Ager's original ideas. Mr. Ager is secretary of the Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society, secretary of the J. C. Gilbert Home and School Association, and active in the Chestnut Hill Business Men's Association. He has written a number of articles for Horticultural books and has delivered numerous lectures on the subject.

Horticulturists Elect Officers.

The Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society has elected the following officers: President, John White Geary; vice presidents, John Marsden, Dr. George Woodward, F. H. Michell, John S. Hey, John Story Jenks, Jr., Joseph Ellis; secretary, Stephen Ager; treasurer, Charles Bustard; executive committee, James Bell, William Checewsky, James Bustard, Charles A. Knapp, John Little, James Ward, John Rigney, James Wilkinson, R. J. Glymp, James Williams, Frederick Marschnall; honorary vice presidents, Andrew Blair, R. H. Bayard Bowie, Joseph S. Clark, W. Dick, Samuel Goodman, Jr., Francis F. Gowen, G. L. Harris, J. J. Henry, Charles Henry, J. Arthur Lea, Henry A. Laughlin, Edward R. Laughlin, Judge J. S. Willis Martin, C. Stuart Patterson, Charles N. Welsh, Edward Welsh, George Welling, Jr., and Min- turn T. Wright.

UNDATED

MOVING A GROVE OF BIG TREES

Cedars and Pines Brought from Skip-
pack and Planted on the Grounds
of Mrs. C. W. Henry.

UNUSUAL TRANSPLANTING

A remarkable undertaking in landscape engineering is now in progress on the grounds of Mrs. Charles W. Henry, Springfield and Cherokee avenues, St. Martin's. It consists of the planting of some twenty-five full grown trees on the grounds, the trees having been removed from their original place of growth, in Montgomery County.

From Mrs. Henry's mansion the grounds slope down toward Springfield avenue and the Wissahickon Creek, to the west. On this hillside the trees are being planted. A dozen of the trees, consisting of pines, cedars and one oak, are now in position, and about fifteen more are to be planted.

The trees are twenty-five to thirty feet high. Some of the pines have a spread of thirty feet or more, and the trunks measure eight to twelve inches in diameter.

The pine and cedar trees already planted were obtained from the farm of Jacob A. Markley, in Skippack Township, Montgomery County. The trees were dug up with a mass of frozen earth eight or ten feet in diameter attached to the roots, the work being done in winter so the roots would thus be better protected. Burlap was then wrapped about the trees and they were loaded on wagons and removed to the Henry estate. There a force of laborers dug large holes, into which the trees were placed, a stream of water being poured into the hole from a hose during the progress of the planting.

The oak tree that has been planted was obtained from the Andorra Nurseries, Chestnut Hill. It is forty feet high, has a spread of thirty-five feet, and the trunk has a diameter of fourteen inches.

The father of Mrs. Henry, the late H. H. Huston, pursued a similar method twenty years ago in planting trees on his grounds, on the north side of Springfield avenue, in the same neighborhood.

Dr. George Woodward, whose wife is a sister of Mrs. Henry and whose home is to the south of Mrs. Henry's, is also interested in an unusual tree-planting proposition. He is making preparations to remove a large beech tree of beautiful proportions from the property of Mrs. Griscom, at Mermaid lane and Devon street, to the triangular plot at Germantown avenue and Mermaid lane.

MOVED A BIG TREE

Now Adorns the Intersection of Germantown Avenue and Mermaid Lane.

Dr. George Woodward had a big beech tree moved this week from a grove at Mermaid lane and Devon street to the triangular plot at Germantown avenue and Mermaid lane.

The tree is forty feet high and the trunk measures more than a foot in diameter.

The work was done on Monday and Tuesday. A great mass of earth was permitted to remain attached to the roots, being held in place by burlap wrappings. The tree was then placed on skids and thus moved down Mermaid lane. It was necessary to cut all the wires crossing Mermaid lane to permit the tree to pass.

According to old inhabitants, the tree now stands upon the spot where a flag pole was erected at the time of the Civil War, the raising of a flag there being the occasion of a big popular demonstration.

1916

The Andorra Nurseries are shipping thirty full grown oak trees, the trunks being fourteen inches in diameter, to the country estate of Eugene DuPont, near Centerville, Md. Each tree is loaded on an automobile truck at the nurseries at Chestnut Hill and thus conveyed to Centerville.

CIRCA 1916

THE GERMANTOWN
INDEPENDENT-GAZETTE

1916

FINE DISPLAY OF 1919 GARDEN PRODUCTS

Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society
Has Its Tenth Annual
Exhibition.

MANY PRIZES AWARDED

Flowers and vegetables, glorious specimens such as grow on the expansive estates of Chestnut Hill, are shown in luxurious splendor at the tenth annual exhibition of the Chestnut Hill Horticultural Society. This was opened last evening in Joslin Hall, Germantown avenue below Highland avenue, and continued all day to-day, closing this evening.

The chrysanthemum predominates, while there are also unusually large collections of vegetables and fruits. Prizes aggregating \$200 were awarded.

Among the prizes awarded for the best chrysanthemums shown were the following:

"Colonel Appleton," six in a vase, grown by David Whiteford, gardener to Mrs. John Storey Jenks;

"Cheltonie," a beautiful yellow flower, grown by Hugh Scott, gardener to Mrs. W. W. Frazier, Jr., of Jenkintown.

"Mary Mason," owned by Mrs. W. W. Frazier, Jr.

"Colonel Appleton," by Miss Mary Vanuxem.

"F. S. Vallis," a reflex of yellow, grown by Edward Smith, gardener to Mrs. E. N. Benson.

"Montigney," a yellow flower, owned by Mrs. John Storey Jenks.

"Bringhurst," a reflex pink, grown by Edward Smith.

"Glenview," a bronze flower, grown by Charles Hickey, gardener to Judge J. Willis Martin.

There were Belgian carrots two feet long; Japanese and Chinese eggplants, of a red color, the size of a small tomato; four-pound beets, grown by Raymond J. Milner, a schoolboy; a bunch of Barbarossa grapes, weighing five pounds, grown by John Ward, gardener to Mrs. John Bohlen; two specimens of English melons, "Emerald Gem" and "Hero Lockinge," grown by Edwin J. Day, gardener to Samuel Fels.

The society holds monthly meetings in Library Hall, Chestnut Hill. Murray Bohlen is president, Edwin J. Day, recording secretary; R. L. Ramsay, financial secretary, and Charles Bustard, treasurer.

THE GERMANTOWN
INDEPENDENT-GAZETTE