



Flowerpots Through Time

Flowerpots have a number of uses, from transporting plants to new locations, starting seeds, patio and indoor cultivation of plants, and the growing of tender plants in colder regions indoors. Through the centuries, the use of flowerpots has influenced the horticultural use of plants, and the Egyptians were among the first to use pots to move plants from one location to another. The Romans brought potted plants inside during cold weather. In the 18th century, pots were used to ship breadfruit seedlings from Tahiti to the West Indies. Also orchids, African violets and Pelargonium geraniums were shipped in pots from other parts of the world, including Africa, to North America and Europe.



Decorative flower pots became very fashionable in 18th century England and America. Famous English potter Josiah Wedgwood was said to be at one point most well known for his beautiful flower pots like this one.

Our Club's Purpose

To encourage and cultivate an interest in gardening, to aid in the protection and conservation of natural resources, to encourage the study of horticulture and flower arranging, and to promote civic beauty.

From the Editor

I hope that the new year has been treating you well. So far we seem to have mostly escaped the worst that winter has had to offer this season and have been privileged to enjoy an unusual abundance of snowy owls. I also hope you've been able to take advantage of this "slow time" in the gardening year to take stock and do some reading and planning. It's a good time to attend meetings and events that winter spares. I hope you make our February meeting one of them!

Virginia Hallman

February Meeting

Surprise Craft — Flower Pot Painting
February 6, 6:45 pm — 1910 Building Annex

Our talented 1st VP, Joan Tranfaglia, will lead a hands-on workshop in creating a garden treasure out of a plain clay or plastic flower pot for yourself, or to donate to our annual plant sale. It will be a fun, social and lively evening—don't miss it!

Joan will supply paints, some templates and most of the other supplies. You will need to bring:

- Old clothes you don't mind getting paint on
- A plain, clean, dry flower pot of any size, either plastic or clay. Give clay pots time to dry if you are cleaning them first.
- A potato and/or carrot for a stamping tool along with a small knife for cutting (tape your initials on it)
- Styrofoam if you have it, also for stamping
- Rubber gloves (optional)

Hostesses for the meeting are Joan Tranfaglia (Chair), Barbara Berkenbush, Carrie Crowley, Gloria Curan, Tracy Peter and Joan Quackenbos

Need a ride to the meeting? Call Linda Schaeffer, 978-363-5251.

*A garden is a real place imagined, and, with time and care,
an imagined place made real. Patrick Lane*



Thoughtful Gardening by Virginia Hallman

Traditionally, this is the time of the year when we gardeners browse seed catalogs and think about what to plant come spring. Following are a variety of ways to think about you and your garden that will help you to make thoughtful decisions about what you'll do this coming gardening season.

ABOUT YOU

What happened last year? What went well in in your garden and what particularly pleased you? What things didn't go well? Based on those comparisons, what do you want to avoid, discontinue, start, continue, change or add this year?

Which plant types thrive on your property and why? Which plants do best given your soil type and amount of sunlight, moisture and temperature levels in your garden areas? Which plants don't?

Why do you garden? Are you interested in collecting certain plants? In horticulture and the experience of growing and tending plants? Do you want a pleasant place to entertain guests? Is your garden for display to others or is it a personal, serene sanctuary? Does it create privacy and quiet? Is it a place for children to play? Is your garden artful or quirky? How does it express your beliefs and personality? How much time, effort and expense will you contribute to it? How important is fragrance, sound and/or visual interest or harmony in your garden? Do you follow a certain garden style? Is it formal or informal? Traditional or unusual? Do you often reinvent your garden or do you prefer to let it mellow and evolve in its own way? If it's an inherited garden, does it match your likes and interests or would you prefer something much different? Describe your garden, what you like best to do in it, and how you feel about it in 25 words or less. Now you have a map of sorts to inform your gardening decisions.

ABOUT the REST

As the natural world shrinks around us and as we humans observe and learn more about what remains of it, our viewpoints and challenges change. Not that long ago we were all about overcoming nature. These days the trend is towards luring nature back into our gardens and outdoor spaces in order to encourage ecological balance and revitalize natural relationships. This means considering how A impacts B when considering which plants to incorporate in your garden.

Take trees for example. You may have recently heard about a study showing the long horned beetle enjoys a much higher reproductive success rate on Red maples than it does on Norway or Sugar maples. Or you may have seen entomologist Douglas Tallamy's ranking of commonly planted trees a few years back comparing a oak tree native to the region to a ginkgo—the oak accommodates 537 species of butterflies while the ginkgo supports just 3. Tree provenance matters.

In the 1800's it was considered fashionable to introduce exotic plants and ornamentals from distant lands into American gardens. In the mid-1900's plants such as the autumn olive and multi-floral roses were widely planted both to provide wildlife habitat and to stem soil erosion. More recently a ladybird beetle from Asia became a popular replacement for chemical control of aphids and such but invades our houses in the fall to hibernate. As we have learned, non-native plants and animals —whether they arrived by intent or accident—tend to become overly successful here and can be deadly to natives that encounter them. Out of today's array of available ornamental, exotic, native and heirloom plants, which do you favor and why or why not?

Finally, it's just possible you could embrace the current trend of creating a highly sustainable garden populated with attractive native plants complete with a thriving naturalized wooded component. In short, you could potentially achieve an ecological haven only to realize that this is not why you took up gardening in the first place and that the thriving wildlife you've successfully encouraged is, after all, increasingly more of a bane to your time outdoors than it is a blessing as it buzzes, hovers, invades, stings, howls, munches, bites, slithers, zooms and preys.

Recommended Reads

BLOG: *Grounded Design* at: <http://landscapeofmeaning.blogspot.com/> Thomas Rainer thinks deeply and writes beautifully and shares links to wonderful sites.

BOOK: *What is a Garden For?* By Rory Stuart is an enriching book by an English garden designer and very capable writer who explores famous gardens with unique thoughtfulness.

Notes from the 1/9 Board Meeting

- **The Club's annual plant sale needs one chairperson or two co-chairpersons to plan, organize and run this year's event. It's the Club's fundraiser for the year and supports the Scholarship Fund. We especially urge our new members to consider volunteering; you don't need to have been a Club member for a certain amount of time and you're likely to have some new ideas for making the sale a success. Contact our past co-chairpersons, Linda Schaeffer and Kathy Krajewski to learn more or volunteer.**

MEMBER NEWS

- **President Jane Jeffers is enjoying the Florida breezes these days, returning around March 12. In her absence, contact Club VP's Joan Tranfaglia or Linda Schaeffer regarding Club business.**

Boston Flower Show at the Seaport World Trade Center, **March 12–16**. The theme this year is Romance in the Garden. Learn more at <http://www.bostonflowershow.com/>. The Club is working on arrangements for a bus to take members and interested others to this year's show. Learn more and sign up at the February meeting or Contact Donna Greene, 978-502-4139.



GCFM Events

As most of you are aware, the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, of which our Club is a member, offers a variety of programs to increase gardeners' knowledge and skills. We hope you will be able to benefit from one or more of these upcoming offerings. Learn more at www.gcfm.org.

Horticultural Mornings (\$5 donation at the door)

Monday, March 3 at 10 AM at the South Church in Andover: Betty Saunders of the vegetable garden at Elm Bank speaks on "Vegetables for your Garden".

Monday, April 28 at 10 AM at the Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Boylston: Mal Condon, owner of the Nantucket Hydrangea Farm speaks on "Hydrangeas for Every Landscape".

Gardening Study School

April 3–5 at Tower Hill Botanic Garden. This is Course 1, Series 10 in a GCFM series of courses. To learn about this and other Schools offered, contact GCFM.

Happenings

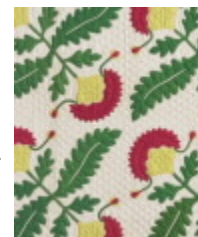
6th Annual Spring Gardening Forum at Nunan's Garden Center in Georgetown on **Tuesday, Feb. 18** at 6:30. \$5. Victory gardener Roger Swain is the featured speaker. Refreshments will be served. Sponsored by the Haverhill, Georgetown, and Groveland garden clubs. Attendees will receive 20% off purchases that evening at Nunan's.

C. L. Fornari, Master Gardener from Osterville on Cape Cod, will share her wisdom and ideas on perennials, annuals and flowering bushes. Learn more about this accomplished and energetic writer, radio host and blogger at www.gardenlady.com.



A representative from Marini Farms in Ipswich will also be on hand to answer questions and give advice on growing vegetables in our area such as best varieties and how to plant them.

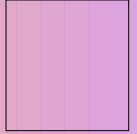
MFA's Art in Bloom will blossom at the museum on **April 26 –28**. Learn more at: <http://www.bostonflowershow.com/>. This year's Art in Bloom highlights include the gorgeous Impressionist favorites in the Torf Gallery and the fabulous "Quilts and Color" exhibition in the Gund Gallery. There's an array of special events as well; tickets to these go on sale February 27.



Editor's Note My formerly trusty computer has decided to withhold access to, of all things, the Club's holiday party photos! Hopefully they will grace an upcoming issue.

Wednesday, May 21 at 10 AM at Regis College Fine Arts Center. "Floral Fantasy" with Marie-Francoise Deprez, internationally acclaimed French floral designer, teacher, international judge and the author of 4 books. Seating is limited and tickets are \$20. To check on ticket availability call Sue Kaplan, 781-444-6085 or Helga Frazzette, 508-255-6664. This is sure to sell out, so call soon! Her designs are unique and very modern and artistic.





Next **Board** Meeting:
February 13, 7:00 PM

At: Town Office Building
3rd floor Meeting Room

Next **Monthly** Meeting:
March 6, 6:45 PM
1910 Building Annex
Main Street, West Newbury

Newsletter copy deadline:
18th of the month

Copies of past Newsletters are available online at www.wngc.org

Dear Peony

Dear Gardening Friends:

I see you sitting by the fire, watching the snow drift as larger-than-life flakes dance in a gentle, spiral waltz to land soft white layers on our rural landscape. Wake up you lazy gardener; there's planning to be done! Perhaps this is the time to look through the gardening catalogues and dream of spring. It is also time to get great values on seeds and tools before the season gets under way. But, who is this whining at me from the mail?

Dear Peony,

I need a list, I do. I am the sort of neat gardener who has every tool in its place, and a place for every seed. I need a February list of specifics. Please.

Mrs. Neatnick

Dear MisNeat Listed,

I think I hate you, I do. But I'll learn to get over my disgust of your perfection. Here is a list for zone 5 from www.organicgardening.com.

Specifically Yours,
Peony

- Bring geraniums out of storage; cut them back by half, water well, and set them in a bright, cool window.
- Indoors under lights, start seeds of sun-loving daisies, columbine (*Aquilegia* spp.), stocks (*Matthiola incana*), edging lobelia (*Lobelia erinus*), and shade-seeking impatiens.
- Start seeds of lettuce, onions, leeks, and early tomatoes indoors under lights.
- If ground isn't frozen, sow some spinach and radishes outdoors under cover.
- Force some indoor blooms! Cut branches or gather prunings from fruit trees, lilacs, and forsythia. Put them in a vase with water. Enjoy the flowers a few weeks later.

Who will be your Valentine on February 14? Chris, of Cottage Gardens, Haverhill, and I were talking about love, sweet love, the other day. Hopeless romantics! This year she is making it easy for me with enormous strawberries, dipped in decadent, Belgian chocolate! Call Christine at 978-521-4624, or e-mail at www.christinecottage@aol.com. Ask what else is new this year.