

Mepkin Abbey Garden Volunteer Newsletter

April 2014



Saucer Magnolia Bloom in Luce garden

Spring has come, disappeared and now is appearing again. After the terrible storm and its clean up, the Arborist arrived and brought our Volunteers additional debris to pick up. The amount of work on the trees was astounding, which would not have happened had not the Volunteers been willing to take care of the debris. Again, these people just are amazing. We are almost seeing the end of this, and it has been some task. Thank you, thank you again.



Arborist in the Oak Allee

Here are some additional photos of Volunteers who were on the team the entire time!



Nick with the Flatbed Truck at the burnpile



Norm and Howard



Ursula and Karen, queens of raking and cleaning up



Bob, another Debris Volunteer we rely on, here mowing and grooming St. Peter and St. Mark for visitors.

Garden Updates

The Orchard:

The garden team was concentrating on debris removal this week although we did find time to neaten up the garden a bit on one of our past rainy Tuesdays. The old truck is a gem albeit in the rough. We are able to bring a great deal of wood back in each trip and dump the load without having to man handle things to the ground.

We seem to have accomplished our short term objective, removing the piles in sight of the typical visitor. There is still plenty to do hopefully after we burn the fields.

Jimmy Livingston has donated some blueberries that have been planted in the garden. George brought another fig so keep your eye out for some recipes.

Howard



Raised lettuce beds in Cloister



These are the Vegetable Beds at San Ysidro Ranch I visited while in California. I thought this “might” be a thought for our Orchard guys.

The Retreat Center:

The Retreat Center continues to be full. Father Guerric has had several lecture groups as well as the Aging Contemplatives Group.

Luce Garden:



This is the new view from the Lower Pond walkover

As you can see from above, Green Carolina continues to clear the overgrown areas around the cove at the Garden. Here you see the magnificent Cypress on the right which has been limbed up. The Cypress knees are readily evident. They have also freed the two huge magnolias to the left side, and when they cleared behind them, we discovered enormous azaleas still there. We will continue to work on that embankment so that by next year we will have blooms all the way around. August will be returning the week after Easter to install new Post and Rope near the water and Post and Cable on the Bluff.

The Luce crew is busy with their maintenance chores with the Camellias already blooming and the Azaleas about halfway open. Another week or two they will be at their height.



Luce Garden Walkover May 2012

Well, the Luce Crew has come a long way, baby! Craig sent me the photo taken in 2012 and the following were taken recently. Amazing!





Columbarium:

I am happy to report that the Columbarium work is on track. Peter has met with Three Oaks and is straightening out the Irrigation System. Green Carolina will begin the repair and replanting of the beds and steps next week. I have met with three different metal workers and am awaiting their proposals for the railing here as well as railings at the Luce Garden main steps. I will be working on the pots in the next week that we plan to put back out and the week after Easter, August will be here to repair the trellises.

St Benedict:



Daffodils at St. Benedict

St. Benedict showed us Spring with its beautiful array of flowers. Our angel, Doris, is working currently to clean the beds, prune the plants and get ready for everything else to shine. We had hoped to re-landscape this area, but the work on the house has not been done so we will be waiting until later.

Odds and Ends:



This is Jimmy Livingston, the manager for the mushroom operation. They have occupied the other Greenhouse and he has been very generous with his help to us on keeping the Greenhouse temperatures regulated. Thanks so much for your help, Jimmy.



St John Guest House was taken down recently. St. Anthony on the right will be

landscaped and the area much more attractive.



Remember the Lady Banks Rose that had grown all out of shape and we had it pruned severely? Here it is in full bloom at the entrance to the Arbor. Go by and take a look!

Mystery Photo of the Month:



Obviously this is not at Mepkin. This is at Lotusland, a spectacular garden I visited in Santa Barbara. The lady who developed this garden bought the entire cactus collection from another collector. This only begins to show the extent of it.



Fioli Garden near Woodside in California. This is another significant garden I visited. This was the “country estate” (a gentleman’s farm) of William Bourn. Currently it has 39 full time gardeners (half of which are horticulturist) and 1200 Volunteers. It is on 600 plus acres of gardens!

As plants and trees begin to wake up, we will continue to be busy. We are finishing any pruning of shrubs and trees that do not bloom in the Spring, fertilizing/composting to give a boost, and raking the Live Oak leaves that have been falling in droves. It is never dull here.

My thanks to Howard for the Vegetable/Orchard Garden Report, to Craig for the 2012 Luce photo and Larry McCray for the current photos of Luce Garden. My thanks also to Langhorne for editing. Happy Easter to each of you.