

Mepkin Abbey Garden Volunteer Newsletter
May 2014



White Azaleas at the 10 Man Cottage

April brought better weather with a few rainstorms, and everything seemed to pop out at the same time. The highlight was Easter with Father Gueric providing his usual beautiful scenes in the Church.



Altar at Easter



Lectern at Easter



Resurrection Presentation

The Abbey has been quite busy this past month. The new driveway project that is underway promises to be finished by June 1st in time for the Abbots' and Abbesses' visit on June 4-11. This concrete driveway will run from the Crosswalk on the Walk to the Church and then to the Bicycle Shop behind the Senior Wing .



Preparation for new driveway and parking area



First and second slab poured, third section being worked.

Garden Updates

The Cloister has been an everchanging delight of blooms. The white azaleas (at beginning of this newsletter) were outstanding this year, and are now yielding to the blooming roses at the Monk's Entry to the Church. The daylilies are also budding and several have even opened.



Roses at Monk's Entry to Church

Even more beautiful this year is Stephen's Garden. Brother Joe Payne arrived Easter

Week and installed this wonderful treat. I believe Stephen will outdo us in anything we could do this year!



Stephen's Garden

The Orchard:

The garden crew has refocused our attention on the former vegetable [garden](#) now fruit orchard. We were able to plant the raspberries and fill out the blackberries. We did backslide a bit with tomatoes and peppers planted in one of our raised beds. The focus for vegetables will be the raised brick beds behind the senior wing.

We had a special treat. Dottie arranged for August Breton to construct a new gate on the back side of the garden. The gate is very sturdy and will accommodate a full sized gator. I used the gate last week to bring in a load of mulch for the berries. It saved a great deal of work. With a bit of replanting we should be able to get the gator to most areas of the garden. Thank you Dottie.

Howard



New gate at The Orchard

The Retreat Center:

In April, we added pots to the bench in the grove of trees at the parking lot. It is rare not to see a Retreatant in meditation out there. The area was cleaned up by ever faithful Roy. Thank you, Roy, for another job well done.



Luce Garden:

The big news in Luce is that the Post/Cable and Post/Rope have been installed. As you can see, after clearing the areas along the Cooper River, we needed to be extra sure that our Visitors will be safe there.



Post/Cable on Bluff



Post/Rope at Cove

We will continue to improve this area.

Columbarium:

Our work of refurbishing the beds at the Columbarium and repairing the steps is almost complete. We have added some pots to freshen up the area for those who are visiting their loved ones. The Father Francis Kline Azaleas across the Ravine have been outstanding this year. (They were pictured at the Breezeway in the April Newsletter)





St Benedict:

The climbing roses we transplanted last year from St. Bernard are now gracing the fence at the Farm Entrance. With Doris' care, the result is such a pleasure for all of us who pass through those gates.



Roses at the Farm Entrance Gate

We have also transplanted some of Father Jonas' rose starts from the Greenhouse and hope to have a real display in a year or two.

Odds and Ends:

Many thanks to Jamie and Dennis Nelson (our Creche Wreath couple) for installing pavers under the bench at the Labyrinth. As you can see, it is quite nice in the setting. I have since put a sunny pot there to add to the welcome



A Visiting Couple enjoying lunch at the Labyrinth on the new pavers.

Our newest Volunteer is Jo Edwards. She is a friend of Doris and is a very welcome addition to our group. Welcome, Jo!



Jo Edwards

To end the month of April, and to show our gratitude to the Volunteers who worked miracles after the storm, Ursula planned a very festive picnic—including having the Brothers join us for dessert. As you can see, it was a relaxing time of fellowship.



Picnic at the Breakroom.



The Monks arriving for dessert.



Picnic by the Break Room



Deserts by Brenda, friend of Ursula. Thank you, Brenda!
We thank the Brothers for hosting this treat for all of us.



This is GH Bob and Page.

We took this occasion to wish them well on their semi-retirement and future travels throughout the world. Their help with the Greenhouse through the years has been invaluable. They have promised to send postcards. Thank you, thank you again, for all you have done for the garden program.

With May comes pruning, de-vining and feeding the azaleas and camellias—a huge task, but one that has been and will be very worthwhile. The azaleas were never more beautiful than this year. The Camellias were nipped by the ice storm, but were a lovely sight nevertheless. We also now begin preparing the property for the visit of the Abbots and Abbesses in June.

My thanks to Howard for The Orchard Garden Report, to Brother Anthony Maria, Langhorne, and Pam Russo for the photos. My thanks also to Langhorne for editing.

Dottie

