

Mepkin Abbey Garden Volunteer Newsletter

October 2014



Garden Updates

Store/Arbor:

Currently, the Store is receiving items to be sold during the Creche Festival (November 17-23 and November 28-December 6), so packages are seen everyday. Angel has a friend helping her in the Store now. Drop by and see all the changes!

The Cloister:

The Purple Sage is up and is blooming, covering the spent daylily bed. The mixed bed continues to have blooms. We are allowing the herbs to bloom and go to seed. It is quite nice in the Cloister.



Purple Sage

The Orchard:

. The orchard is doing well? Well, not really too well. The main things that thrive are the fire ants; they seem to find me no matter where I work. We did pick three figs Tuesday. Pretty pathetic since there are tons of them on the plants. Maybe we have turned the corner and the figs will start to ripen.

Bob Marshall patched up the perimeter fence and I can now get the Papa Gator around the inside garden corner without additional damage. We continue to add cardboard and mulch to the paths in hopes of controlling the weeds.

Dottie told us that all the rain should help us with the weeds but we almost lost Norm to a mud hole. When you get a particularly healthy weed it can create quite a suction during extraction.

Every week is an adventure.

Howard



Orchard Deer Fence Repair: Tom, Richard A. and Norm (Bob is missing from this photo)

Luce Garden:

After a day of the Luce Crew directing Green Carolina in Luce Garden, it is spectacular! The crew of three have also cleaned up and mulched the Live Oaks along the road to Luce as well as the field between Luce and the Columbarium.





First camellias blooming at gate to Luce



Mulching in Luce

Columbarium:

The Arborist arrived to remove the large dead Poplar Tree and did other Live Oak “dead men” removal as well. As before, our valiant Volunteers cleaned up debris and cleaned up more debris. Because of them, we have been able to do an extraordinary amount of work on the Live Oaks this year.



Debris pickup from Arborist's work

Retreat Center:

Peter has continued to clear at the Retreat Center grounds. He is at present clearing a view at the bluff over the Cooper River, which will greatly enhance the view from the Common Room at the Center.

[Clermont Cemetery:](#)

The Cemetery, located some distance from the Monastery, was overgrown and the benches rotten. We had a request from one of the Brothers to see if we could get it cleaned up. This is quite a challenge because of the distance we have to haul the debris and benches. Nick and Erwin, our faithful pioneers, cleaned it up and brought in the benches for Brother Joseph to repair. Many thanks, Nick and Erwin, for taking on this job.



Nick at the Philip Simmons Gate at Clermont Cemetery.

Greenhouses:

GH Bob and Paige were kind enough to come out and help us with the GHs and assess what needed to be done. We have two fans down and one Swamp Cooler needed another pump. Ursula and I decided to wait and see how we used the GH this winter. None of these problems has to do with winter. As we no longer propagate our bedding materials, it seemed extravagant to spend this money in a year that we had extraordinary expenses with the ice storm and related tree work. You can see what happens when Paige cleans up GH 1---



Greenhouse 1 after Paige cleanup

Odds and Ends:

Recently we took on the Library exterior and interior, which needed maintenance badly. We were lucky to have a new Volunteer, Allan Cox, who comes now each Tuesday to clean inside and, with the cooler weather, will be cleaning the exterior. You can see from the photo below, he has a really big job ahead and we so appreciate his willingness to help the Brothers in this way.



Mold on exterior of CBL Library

In addition, we have also recruited another Volunteer who worked in the Library at Princeton University for years. Her name is Julie Arnheim, and she is a childhood friend of Dottie, who just re-connected with her in Charleston. She is coming twice a month to work on the late Bishop Thompson's gift of his library to Mepkin. We have also installed temporary bookshelves in the hall to try to get the books given handled and the boxes out of the corridor.



Julie Arnheim

Mystery Photo:



Dead Poplar Tree in Columbarium



Poplar Tree as Wood Pile

We call this the ultimate re-cycling! The Arborist took down the dead tree and cut it in 18" sections (as requested by Brother Joseph to fit the log splitter) and Joseph (with help from Richard A on one day) turned it into this pile. This wood will be reused to fire the boiler that powers the heating system for the Monastery. Now isn't

that an interesting reuse???

The end of September brought us rain, and more rain. This was wonderful for not having to water the pots and new plantings, but it was not so great for trying to work on the grounds and mowing. We now begin to turn our efforts towards getting ready for the Creche Festival, and the huge job of taking care of all the leaves that have started falling. There is a new website with video on the 2013 Creche Festival (www.mepkinabbey.org/wordpress/2014-mepkin-abbey-creche-festival) and I urge you to watch it. It is beautifully done.

My thanks to Howard for The Orchard Garden Report, Brother Anthony Maria for photographs, and to Langhorne for editing. dottie