

Mepkin Abbey Garden Volunteer Newsletter

July 2016



Agapanthus in the Columbarium

In June, we continued our maintenance plan. We fed the Roses and Gardenias and fed, weeded and cut back the Perennials so they would bloom again, and we removed the dead fronds from the Ferns. I was gone for three weeks and everyone jumped in and helped keep all going. Craig was worn out from mowing as we had three men out all month - two on vacations, and one with a knee replacement. Craig asked I not pray so hard for rain the next time that I leave as we had two major rainstorms, and the grass grew like crazy!

Garden Updates

St. Clare:

St. Clare continues to be an oasis of cool with the Ferns; now the French Hydrangeas are beginning to bloom. They will be a spectacular sight this year with their pinkish red color. In addition, we had blossoms on the Pomegranate Tree.



Pomegranate Tree Blossoms

The Cloister:

The Daylilies in the Cloister have about bloomed out and, because of being groomed, they were kept from going to seed. The Roses like our new Rose food and are coming along nicely. The raised Vegetable Beds have a life of their own. I asked George N earlier in the season to put in some Basil so I could make pesto for the Brothers this year, as has been done for several years. Here is the photo of the current Basil bed. I think I could start a stand out on Dr. Evans Road!



Raised Basil Beds

The Orchard:

The Orchard presses on. Norm and I have what might be called a sustainable job as the weeds continue to grow. I have a feeling their growth would outstrip the brambles

(raspberries and blackberries) if left to their own devices. We are troopers though and press on. Thank heavens and Dottie for the mulch.

The persimmons look promising. We pruned some suckers and the deer keep the lower branches cropped. We are mowing under the trees so the bush hog doesn't have to get dangerously close.

We have lots of figs although the fruit look small. Luckily we have several varieties. It amazes me how adjacent trees can perform so differently despite the same treatment

🍌us Happy Fourth Howard

Luce Garden:

Luce Garden continues to be a picture of perfection. The feature now is this beautiful Lily bed by the edge of the Lower Pond. The Azaleas and Camellias are over, and the Hydrangeas are in full bloom, and, if you walk up to the Upper Pond you will find another Native Perennial in bloom.



Lily bed on edge of Lower Pond



Hydrangeas



Native Perennials at edge of Upper Pond

We have had some issues with growth in the pond, but have consulted with our pond expert and Craig is carrying out his advice to rid us of this. Should the ponds look a little “technicolor”, understand we are a “project in progress” at present.

If keeping up Luce were not enough, the Luce crew took on cleaning up the Live Oak and the Magnolia that are between the Luce Garden and the Farm. It looks amazing and here they are at work.



Magnolia Allee



Nelson as "Mepkin Gothic"



Russ and Craig

Retreat Center:
This month:

Mepkin Urban Contemplatives Retreat

This is a new offering for 2016. Fr. Guerric assisted by a team of other experienced Spiritual Mentors will explore a structure to enable the contemplative life lived in the monastery to take root beyond its walls. The retreat will help participants answer the questions: What is a contemplative experience? How is it cultivated? and, How is it possible to live a more contemplative life in the world today?

July 25 – 29, 2016

July 29 – August 1, 2016

The suggested donation for this retreat is \$350 for weekdays and \$300 for weekends. Because of the demand for this retreat a preregistration fee is required to assure a space. Please send \$200 to: Urban Monastics Retreat, 1098 Mepkin Abbey Rd. Moncks Corner, SC 29461 (Make Check payable to Mepkin Abbey)

Partial or full scholarships may be applied for. Contact Fr. Guerric guerricheckel@gmail.com

(Your booking may be treated as an application in order to make the retreat more intergenerational)

Veterans Retreat: Healing and Hope July 6 – 10, 2016

A four day retreat program designed to help those men and women who have served their country and experienced post trauma stress after experiencing combat, deaths and deployment. At the end of the retreat Veterans will take away an increased understanding of the effects of post

trauma stress and how to work through them successfully. Tools and resources to use after the retreat program ends, and a 90 day action plan to be used moving forward.

The retreat will be co-facilitated with Sr. Ann Dougherty and Rev. Richard Malivuk

The suggested donation for this retreat is \$350

Because of the demand for this retreat a preregistration fee is required to assure a space. Please send \$200 to: Veterans Retreat, 1098 Mepkin Abbey Rd. Moncks Corner, SC 29461 (Make Check payable to Mepkin Abbey)

We do not want finances to prevent anyone from attending this retreat;

Contact Fr. Guerric for scholarship information at guerricheckel@gmail.com or call 843 761-8509 press 1.

The Columbarium:

Last month I mentioned the new Agapanthus bed and photographed its installation. Well, here it is in full bloom! We are very pleased with this show and so far have beat out the deer.



New Agapanthus bed in bloom

Further along past the niches, there is another Lily bed along the retaining wall. Here is one of the Lilies there:



African Lily ?

Odds and Ends:

Mormon Volunteers:

We have a new Elder among the young Volunteers. He is Elder Charles and his photo is below. Elder Anthony has moved away.



Elder Charles

The Volunteers are always fascinated as to what crop will be going in the leased land across from the Breakroom and the Live Oak under which we sit and take a snack/lunch. This year it is corn (last year it was cotton). Those of us “city volunteers” enjoy seeing the development of various products we buy and use/eat.



Cornfield along Farm Road



Young ears of feed corn

Mystery Photo:

This visitor alighted on my back as I sat under the Live Oak to eat lunch. Ursula identified it as a “Katydid”.



Katydid

Recently I read this quote. "In summer, we tend the garden, watch for weeds and crowding, thin what needs air and sun, at rest in the freedom of long days and warm nights, losing ourselves in the gift of sweet air and time." Sabbath, by Wayne Muller. With temperatures in the 90ies and work never finished, I thought the Volunteers would be amused at "losing ourselves in the gift of sweet air and time."

Many thanks to Howard for the Orchard Report and to Langhorne for editing this issue.

Dottie