

Mepkin Abbey Garden Newsletter

September 2019



Magnolia Blossom (Father Jonas)

As last month's terrific heat continued, the Volunteers had to work to keep themselves hydrated, and, as well had to limit their working hours. Even though we had some rain, the need to water continued, especially for the pots throughout the property, and, several downpours (more water than you want in a few hours) caused the need for drainage repairs.

The deadheading and pruning the Daisies, Daylilies and Hydrangeas continued, and this month we will concentrate on fertilizing them and getting them ready for winter.

Update on Gardens:

Store:

The Fern circle is recovering and the Lantana has gone wild! Also in the parking court we constantly battle sticks, and the wisteria whose roots must go to the center of the earth.



Fern Circle



Lantana

St. Clare:

St. Clare Walk is featuring a nice stand of Papyrus and the Encore Azaleas are trying to bloom again..



Papyrus



Elephant Ears



Encore Azaleas

Cloister:

The plumbago is very showy in the Cloister, as are the full herb beds.



Plumbago



Raised Herb Beds

Orchard:

Norm and I have been pursuing a new strategy of mowing vs digging. Weeds that is. It looks neater from the approach road. We came to a decision today that we will plant a row of strawberries. Jimmy Livingston will be our consultant. Jimmy and his wife grow great berries at Wabi-Sabi Farm, so he has the expertise if only he can convey it to us.

We cut around the persimmons today with a high wheel mower and weed eater. The fruit looks good and plentiful. We hope it's not discovered by some critters. Jimmy told us that a friend showed him pictures of bears on the property. I bet they can strip our trees in a night or two. Raccoons cleaned my persimmons at home. I sometimes wonder if the supermarket is a better way to get fruit.

Howard

Columbarium:

Our challenge this month was "taming" the Ravine which had become totally overgrown. The Black-eyed Susan continue to light up the entrance.



The challenge of the Ravine



Clean up in progress



Cleaned up Ravine

The Ravine will be full of Native plants in a short while, now that the vines have been removed.



Black-eyed Susan

Bee Hives:

Diane Rouse, our "bee lady," asked that we plant a field of Buckwheat

behind the Greenhouse for the bees. They tilled the soil, seeded, and up came the Buckwheat, followed by Sunflowers! What a visual treat it has been. Hopefully we will get another natural round of Buckwheat from the seeds. The bees send their regards!



Buckwheat in bloom



Sunflowers in bloom



The field of Sunflowers

Annual Picnic for Staff and Volunteers:

The highlight of August was the annual picnic the Brothers give the Staff and Volunteers. As usual, it was a lovely occasion with good food, awards and wonderful fellowship. Thank you, thank you, Brothers, for providing this delightful festivity each year.







The Awards were most exciting for the Garden People:

Gold (1000 hours)



**Tom McClusky (Store), Fr. Joe and George Clark (Gardens)
There were also two other Golds: Sylvia Bras (Gardens) and Al Kennedy**



Our Mary Ludlow advanced to Red (150 hours)



Greg and Jill Ewell (Garden and Docents) advanced to Blue (750 hours each)



Kathy Mitchell (Garden and Docent) advanced to Purple (500 hours)

Congratulations to all these hard working Garden Volunteers as well as other Garden Volunteers who advanced. We so appreciate your work.

Monastic Institute:

Last month I mentioned the wonderful three Monastic Institute Volunteers who helped us. They were a wonderful addition to a much needed Garden workforce. Here is a photo of the entire group along with the Brothers.



Monastic Institute 2019

Father Joe:

Father Joe made a trip to Ecuador to visit the Trappistines that Mepkin sponsors. Father Stan moved there to be their priest in August.



Trappistines in Ecuador with Father Joe

Odds and Ends:

New Volunteers:

At last I have a photo of two of the three Turners. Phil and Daniel (Alysee is missing) have been helping us on a regular basis. Welcome, welcome.



John and Daniel Turner

We also were blessed with another new Volunteer, John Kadlecik. We so appreciate your participation, John, and look forward to working with you!



John Kadlecik

Creche Festival for 2019:

Mepkin has announced the dates for the 2019 Creche Festival: November 16-22; November 26-December 5th. The Online registration for a ticket will be on the Website starting on October 1st.

We continue to need more Volunteers. Surgery, age and illness have cut our ranks. With the Creche Festival coming, we really need more people to help. Please contact Craig Clark, mepkin.volunteers@gmail.com.

My thanks to Howard for the Orchard Report, to Father Jonas for the photos of the Annual Picnic (I could not have reported on that without him!) and to Langhorne for editing.

Thank you for your continuing compliments emailed to me about the gardens. I share these each month with the Volunteers and I hope this brings you a little closer to “the place” if you live far away.

Until next month, dottie

As a postnote: August 27th marked the 13th Anniversary of Abbot Francis Kline’s death. Each year, Ursula does a flower arrangement for his family.

