

## Mepkin Abbey Garden Newsletter

March 2020



### **First wave of Azaleas in Luce**

**Rain, rain, go away—come again another day (preferably this summer!). Mepkin is saturated with water after a pattern of warm days, rain and then a 20 degree drop in weather,—only to start over with warm days, and then rain again! It has played havoc with the early blooming azaleas (the photo above was before another freeze, which turned all the blooms and buds brown).**

**This month we will be feeding the Spring bulbs (as they grow and die down), the Hydrangeas, which will also get sulfur to turn the blossoms blue, the Daylilies which are popping up, and the Roses, which have been pruned. This also is the month we burn the Labyrinth and grasses. The Camellias, the early Azaleas and the Bulbs are blooming, as is the Tulip Magnolia.**

### **Update on Gardens:**

#### **Store:**

**There is a new surprise at the Store. To the right is St. Ann, which has been converted into a Farmer's Market store, open at present only every few weeks on the weekend. Enzo (the Chef) is offering bakery goods for sale; the Garden Program will have herbs and succulents; and the Agriculture Program will be stocking it with produce as it comes in.**



**Here, Ted and his helper are installing the sign for the Farmers Market.**

**St. Clare:**

**St. Clare is fairly quiet, with a few ferns in evidence, and the wonderful Camellia at the cross paths blooming.**



**Cloister/Church:**

**Exterior Church Renovations Completed**

**“The first phase of the renovation of our church has now been completed. The work on the exterior has taken a few months, and the church is now being used again as normal. The work consisted of the replacement of sixteen clerestory windows, the wood structure around several windows, and**

**the reordering of the flashing around them. In addition, walls were repaired, as well as the roof joints. The staining on the church has been removed, and a new layer of stucco has been applied. All of the windows have been sealed to protect them from leaks, so hopefully there will be no more water dripping into the church during heavy rainstorms. The cross and the anchor on the roof of the church have been repainted as well. The next phase will be working to develop the plans for the repair and upgrading of the interior of the church, and we will keep you posted on the website.” (Mepkin Abbey Website)**





**The Labyrinth and Firemen's Memorial:**

**Howard and Norm tried to burn the Labyrinth and Firemen's Memorial fields but were rained out. These photos are as they started their work. It will have to dry off before they can try again. Why prescribed burning? To keep a diversity in the plants in the Labyrinth.**





## **Prescribed burn**

### **Orchard:**

**Things in the orchard have been slow. The strawberries are getting bigger and sprouting flowers but no fruit as yet. Jimmy Livingston brought a basket of the first berries from Wabisabi. Outstanding as usual it elevates our hopes.**

**The blueberries are looking good but they are young for much fruit this year. We had treated the area around the plants with wettable sulfur to lower the soil pH. We have to be careful of the mushroom compost since it will raise the pH. Pine straw will be the ideal compost. We will have to forage in the woods.**

**We moved around the blackberries and continue to reestablish the arbor. They seem to wander, it will be much easier if we can keep things in their place.**

**The citrus are looking good. The yurts were tight and with the lights offer the needed protection from cold.**

**We have had plenty of rain even when we were trying to burn the labyrinth. If things dry out we will try again. Oh a farmer's life.**

### **Howard**

#### **Luce Garden:**

**Before the last freeze, Luce was shaping up to be magnificent again this year. These are before the freeze photos. Not all is lost. We have a second wave of flowers to come.**





**As you can see, the Camellias in the background are blooming as are the bulbs in Our Lady's Room.**





**Camellias at the Luce garden parking area**

**Columbarium:**

**The work at the Columbarium was major this month. Capp had helpers cutting down the River Oats that cover the large hill down the ravine from the Niches. Cutting them in preparation for the new growth coming in is a job -- not only to cut, but then to haul away all the debris!**



**Odds and Ends**

**Memorial Arbor:**



**“A new and exciting project is starting at Mepkin. If lately you were driving towards the store, you may have noticed that near the entrance to the African-American cemetery the ground has been cleared and a pathway has been made. This is going to be our new Memorial Garden. The plan is for the planting of trees and flowers. People will be invited to come to it and walk around it on the pathway as an oasis of prayer and quiet. All will be welcome to purchase a block on which will be engraved the name of a loved one. We will have more details on the website soon about this new venture as well as how and where you can purchase a block for someone you would like to remember” ( Mepkin Abbey Website) See order form next.**

## Memorial Arbor Brick Order Form

Mepkin Abbey invites you to add a brick to our Memorial Arbor. Each 4"x8" red brick will cost \$100 and arrive with centered, all caps, black lettering. There is room on each brick for three lines and eighteen spaces (common engraving: "IN LOVING MEMORY OF..."). The proceeds from each brick will go directly to maintaining the gardens and grounds of the monastery. Opportunities are also available to purchase tree and bench memorials: please email the address below if interested. Mepkin Abbey reserves the right to approve all engraved messages.

**Yes, we'd like to reserve a permanent brick. Please engrave our brick as follows:**


**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AND YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO:**

Mepkin Abbey  
c/o Memorial Brick Fund  
1098 Mepkin Abbey Road  
Moncks Corner, SC 29461

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Amt Paid / Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Form and Payment must both be received before we can place your order.**

If you have any questions, please email [mepkin.volunteers@gmail.com](mailto:mepkin.volunteers@gmail.com).



**Other exciting news is the announcement of two new Postulants and three new Observers!**

**New Postulants:**



## **Jesus Acosta and Jophan Porter (Mepkin Abbey Website)**

### **New Observers:**



**Fr. Joe Kerrigan, Richard Bradley and Matthew Landis**

**My thanks to Howard for the Orchard Report , Craig for the photo of the Memorial Arbor sign and the Memorial Arbor Brick Order Form and Langhorne for editing. Langhorne will be taking a break from editing the next few months. We will look for her in the future! We cannot thank her enough for the hours she has spent helping me with the Newsletter. Thank you, Langhorne.**

**The season of Lent has started. Let us try, through prayer, fasting and doing things for others, to “recalibrate” our spiritual life. Working at or a visit to Mepkin Abbey, you will experience its “shockingly beautiful” areas—enjoying the “solidity, clarity and predictability you will find in nature”(Paula Huston).**

**Looking forward to St. Patrick’s Day (for those lucky enough to be Irish) and ahead to the glory of Easter. Until next month, dottie**