

# *Old Westbury Gardens*



***Clippings from the Gardens  
Fall/Holiday 2012***

## President's Letter

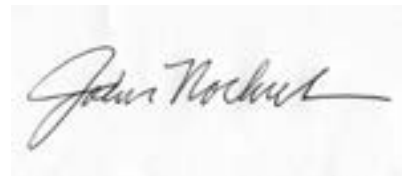
Another great season at Old Westbury Gardens will soon draw to a close. I'm happy to report that attendance is up, as it has been for the last three years. Along with perennial favorites like Picnic Pops, antique auto shows, and dog weekends, we also tried some new programs. We introduced Eco Heroes and Expedition Green, two week-long, hands-on, summer camp programs for young ecologists and aspiring gardeners. The public's response to The Rise, a spectacular exhibit of over 5000 individually designed Jack O' Lanterns that had illuminated our weekend evenings in October, was almost overwhelming. We even tweaked a classic, the Scottish Festival, by expanding it into a two-day event.

It requires some thought to name the activities that have taken place in 2012. Now imagine multiplying that by 53 years. That's what you would have to do to compile a list of the events and programs that have occurred during the tenure of Mrs. Howard Phipps, Jr., who has been a key member and driving force behind Old Westbury Gardens since its inception in 1959 (and who is and will always remain as the Mary in any conversation about the Gardens).

Mary just recently stepped down as Chair-

man of the Board of Trustees. Happily for us, she isn't going anywhere. We will still be able to take advantage of her long history with the house and grounds. In her position as Chairman Emeritus, Mary will remain involved at the Gardens, especially in the area of fundraising. It would be impossible within the confines of this President's Letter to give even a pared down summary of the ways Old Westbury Gardens has benefited under Mary's leadership. In our next newsletter we will attempt to do justice to Mary's many achievements.

We can all take great comfort, though, in the selection of Mary's successor. Our new Chairman, confirmed unanimously by the Board of Trustees, is Carol Large. Carol, with a seemingly endless supply of energy and purpose, has served Old Westbury Gardens since 1992, as an essential member of various committees, as President for 10 years, and as Vice-Chairman since 2006. Carol thus becomes only the third Chairman in the history of Old Westbury Gardens (Peggie Phipps Boegner was our first), and the leadership of this wonderful place remains in excellent hands.



## Gardeners' Fair

The 2012 Gardeners' Fair set a new standard for live music. Soneros de Verdad came straight from Cuba to entertain guests who took full advantage by dancing the night away to this exciting Latin sound. Held in a large tent decorated as a lively nightclub circa 1958, the event had an exceptional vibe. Among the many auction purchases, three adventurous couples from Garden City bought the trip to Cuba organized by Luly Duke. Sherrill and Eduardo Canet were the evening's honorees. Eduardo's speech was an elegant narrative to the opportunities available to Cubans here in America.



From left, Howard and Mary Phipps, Eduardo and Sherrill Canet, John and Kathryn Harlow

The Gardens couldn't have done it without the tremendous efforts of our Gardeners' Fair Committee chaired by Kathryn and John Harlow, and underwriting from Enrique and Robin Senior, Carol and Jim Large, Sharon and Marvin Schechter, Beatrice and Randolph Guthrie, and Mary Kathryn Navab.

## Preservation Dinner

For the last 18 years, Old Westbury Gardens has been hosting a Preservation Dinner Party to focus on preservation projects at Westbury House or on the grounds. We are delighted to report that this year's event, which will be held on Friday evening, November 30, will be chaired by Arlene and Arthur Levine. A special tribute is planned to acknowledge the many accomplishments of the Gardens' Chairman of the Board, Mary S. Phipps. It promises to be an elegant and memorable dinner party.

## Hat Luncheon

On October 2, for the third year, Old Westbury Gardens once again held a Hat Luncheon. Organized by the Children in Bloom Committee and chaired by Joan Hope MacNaughton, this event raised funds for children's programs presented at the Gardens throughout the year. The theme was an English Manor luncheon, fittingly held in the Red Ballroom of our English Manor, Westbury House. Our guest speaker was Carol McDonald Wallace who co-

wrote *To Marry an English Lord*. This book is described by Julian Fellowes, the creator of *Downton Abbey*, as "a marvelous and entertaining study of the American girls who came over to England, mostly between 1890 and 1914, to marry into the British aristocracy."

Media coverage of this event included *Newsday*, *Anton Publications*, and *25A Magazine*.



From left, Old Westbury Gardens' Development Director, Doreen Banks, Joan Hope MacNaughton, committee members Marie Zere and Michelle Zere



Some interesting new faces this year included a pirate show at the Scottish Festival and the hand-carved Jack O'Lanterns at The Rise exhibit



## Annual Appeal

Old Westbury Gardens' Trustee Lloyd Zuckerberg is chairing the 2012 Annual Appeal. The success of the Annual Appeal is the single most important factor in meeting the Gardens' budget goals. But it is all the more important this year, given the considerable additional expenses required to deal with the devastating effects of storm damage from Sandy and the nor'easter. Lloyd has been very busy contacting our supporters in the hopes of achieving an even greater outcome than in 2011. The Gardens has been truly fortunate that donors have continued to give, even during this recession, because they believe in its importance to the Long Island community.

## Environmental Education

The following are excerpts from a letter from Donna Sabella, a teacher at Dryden School in Westbury.

For the past several years, the Westbury Public Schools have had a partnership with Old Westbury Gardens in order to provide our students with the opportunity to become aware of the importance of working with neighborhood organizations. This past year has been a continuation of the excellence and quality of previous years' programs.

The opportunity to visit Old Westbury Gardens and participate in a hands-on learning experience led by gifted professionals is an invaluable one. Many of our students have never visited the Gardens, and are awed by the prospect of visiting such a magnificent and magical place so close to their homes and school.

We visited the Gardens on harvest day so each student as well as our community

visitors were able to bring home a freshly picked head of lettuce. It was difficult to decide if the students or adults were more excited about this special and unexpected gift.

The partnership between Old Westbury Gardens and Westbury Public Schools, particularly with the Pre-K and Kindergarten students at Dryden School, is an extraordinary, multi-curricular, educational experience. It has been my privilege and pleasure to coordinate this program in partnership with Lisa Reichenberger from Old Westbury Gardens.



*The sudden appearance of a fire engine parking in front of Westbury House early one morning in September did cause some understandable consternation for our staff. But it turned out that the Carle Place Fire Department simply wanted to take pictures of Westbury House to be featured in their 2013 Calendar. We happily obliged, although some advanced notice would have made the experience less alarming.*



## Staff Profile

by Maura Brush

Scott Lucas, head grower at Old Westbury Gardens, was no late bloomer. His love of gardening took hold when he was only 10 years old. Living in Ulster County, NY, Scott and his grandfather would work tirelessly towards their goal of having the largest tomatoes in town. Within a few years, Scott's interests had branched out and he immersed himself in design, laying out his very own trial tulip garden when he was only 13. Like most garden lovers, Scott wasn't content to leave the flowers in the garden, and he became fascinated by floral design as well. By the time Scott was in middle school, he was scouring his backyard and its surrounding meadows for materials that would work well in the centerpieces he would design for the Sunday dinner table.

Scott's passion for plants carried him through high school, eventually taking him to SUNY Delhi where he majored in Landscape Design and minored in Greenhouse Management. After college, Scott's first move to Long Island was for a 24 month horticulture internship at Planting Fields Arboretum in Oyster Bay. Scott enjoyed the warmer growing zone, the ocean beaches, and the proximity to Manhattan. So it was no surprise that after working on a private estate and then for *Martha Stewart Living* magazine, Scott would return to Long Island to put down roots.

Scott has been sharing his talents with us at Old Westbury Gardens for over 15 years. He began work in the Cutting Garden, then moved on to the role of head grower. Scott is responsible for all the beautiful arrangements that grace the rooms of Westbury House (growing most of the flowers himself from seed), and for the unique and creative designs that complement many of the Gardens' special events.



## Costumes and Cocktails

As part of the excitement surrounding The Rise of the Jack O'Lanterns exhibit, Sandy and Nelson DeMille agreed to Chair Old Westbury Gardens' first Halloween Costumes and Cocktails Party which was held on October 27. Guests won prizes for a variety of costume categories such as Best Male, Best Female, Best Couple, Best Superhero, Best Villain, Most Historical, and Most Literary. Afterwards, guests enjoyed a walk through The Rise exhibit and returned to tour Westbury House decorated for this fall holiday.



From left, Nelson and Sandy DeMille, with Deb and Bob Hussey

## Psyche

by Vince Kish

Many of the statues that decorate the grounds of Old Westbury Gardens are based on characters that appear in Roman and Greek mythology. Given their age and their exposure to the elements during three seasons each year, they are in reasonably good shape, other than a few missing appendages here and there. Three of the figures who have what I think are particularly interesting mythologies are located near the West Pond.

Standing just behind the middle of the Colonnade is Diana the Huntress. Born on the island of Delos to Jupiter and Athena, one of Diana's talents was a Dr. Doolittle-like ability to talk to and control animals. She possessed a particular fondness for hunting dogs and deer. Among other things, Diana was also the goddess of the moon. One would think that NASA might have named the lunar missions after Diana. But they went with the god of the sun, Apollo, who happened to be Diana's twin brother. (Sometimes a goddess just can't catch a break).



About 100 feet south of Diana stands Atlas, or perhaps staggers Atlas, given the great weight he is carrying. This fellow made the titanic error of backing the wrong side in the war between the Titans and the Olympians. His punishment was to shoulder the responsibility for holding up not the earth, under which he is often depicted, but the sky, and presumably

*Diana, getting into the spirit of The Rise of the Jack O' Lanterns*

everything in it. The ancient Greeks, including Plato and Aristotle, imagined outer space as a series of celestial spheres or orbs. So if Atlas ever shrugs, our problems will be universal.

But my favorite character over there is the one perched at the edge of the pond. Given the hanging around looking into the water aspect of this piece, especially when viewed from a distance, some visitors assume that this may be Narcissus. But it's actually a woman. A few of my colleagues here have suggested that it may be Echo. (And it feels like I've heard that opinion over and over). However, in the absence of clear evidence otherwise, it seems reasonable to me that an artist would more likely sculpt a statue of a woman who is known for her great beauty than for her voice. So I'm going with Psyche.



In brief, the drama involves Psyche, Cupid, and Venus. No slouch herself in the looks department, Venus (who can be viewed in the lobby of Westbury House, with both arms still attached) was nonetheless jealous of Psyche. She sends son Cupid to shoot Psyche with an arrow so that she'll fall in love with the next thing she sees, which will preferably be some ogre. (Cupid was actually quite a handsome fellow back long before St. Valentine's Day card manufacturers turned him into an annoying little sprite). Cupid is overcome by Psyche's beauty, he sticks himself with his own arrow, she sees him even though he's invisible, and they

fall for each other head over Achilles heels. Following some plot developments worthy of a daytime soap opera, Psyche gains immortality after drinking some ambrosia, she and Cupid get married, have a daughter, and all, including former busybody Venus, live happily ever after, although given their wacky family history, at some point, some psychiatric help was probably involved.

Eventually, Psyche would drop the ambrosia and switch to sarsaparilla. While visiting the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, executives from a soda company in Waukesha, Wisconsin were intrigued by a painting called "Psyche at Nature's Mirror." They purchased the trademark rights from artist Paul Thurman, enabling Psyche to have a new career as the White Rock girl.

## Storm Aftermath

by Maura Brush

*"To the great tree-loving fraternity we belong. We love trees with universal and unfeigned love, and all things that do grow under them or around them - the whole leaf and root tribe." ~Henry Ward Beecher*

Hurricane Sandy and the Nor'easter that followed were the most damaging weather events in the history of Old Westbury Gardens. Over 100 trees were lost, and hundreds more were damaged. We were very fortunate that none of our gates, walls, or statues were affected by fallen trees or limbs. With the exception of shutters on Westbury House, there was no damage to any historic structures. The cabling systems that we have installed in select trees functioned in the way that they were designed, preventing more catastrophic damage. In the days following the hurricane but preceding the snow, we were also able to preemptively prune and remove plants in and around Westbury House and other valuable targets.

The Horticulture and Visitor Services departments are working together to determine our areas of priority so our staff can make specific areas safe for scheduled events. The Gardens will not be open, however, for touring until the large number of dead and hanging limbs can be addressed and the grounds are safe for our visitors.

Our tree inventory, which was completed in 2010, will be updated this winter, since we have had two hurricanes and two nor'easters since it was originally done. After the inventory, a long-range planting plan will be put into place to recover some of the losses of these last two years.

Although mature trees are irreplaceable and many of our losses were heartbreaking for those that know the Gardens, our soils are some of the best on Long Island. The Horticulture Department takes comfort in knowing that trees planted on this property have a tendency to grow steadily and mainly thrive. Although the task of clean-up is a daunting one, we are all committed to putting the Gardens to rights and opening our gates this April looking the way only Old Westbury Gardens can.



*Near the Ticket Booth, several of the many trees downed by Hurricane Sandy*

Old Westbury Gardens  
Post Office Box 430  
Old Westbury, N.Y. 11568-0430

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 6810  
WESTBURY, NY



## Filming at The Gardens

USA Network's *Royal Pains* returned to The Gardens this summer for their third episode to have been filmed here. Locations included the Red Ballroom and the South Lawn (above).

This winter, the greenhouse area south of the Walled Garden will be used by director Akiva Goldsman for *Winter's Tale*, starring Russell Crowe and Will Smith. Smith's previous visit to Old Westbury Gardens was for 2005's *Hitch*.

The house and grounds will be featured in a Travel Channel series about the best public and private estates in the U. S. The program will likely begin airing in the spring of 2013.

Beyond all reason, and much to the disappointment of every photographer who scouted Old Westbury Gardens and other former estates on the North Shore of Long Island, the recent remake of *The Great Gatsby* that will be released in 2013 was filmed in Australia. While watching the movie, keep an eye out for kangaroos and boomerangs.

Mrs. Etienne Boegner  
(1906-2006)  
*Founder*

Mary S. Phipps  
*Chairman Emeritus*

Carol E. Large  
*Chairman*

Frank Castagna  
*Vice Chairman*

John Norbeck  
*President and CEO*

Anne B. Byers  
*Secretary*

John M. Deignan  
*Treasurer*

Judith Chapman  
Irene Gachot  
*Newsletter Committee*

Vincent Kish  
*Editor, Photographer,  
and Graphic Designer*

Paul Hunchak  
*Calendar of Events*