



Old Westbury Gardens News



Clippings from the Gardens, Summer 2007

President's Letter

As I am sure you have already noticed, our newsletter has a different look. We have introduced four-color printing to better capture the grace and beauty of Old Westbury Gardens. This vibrant new format will better reflect the experiences that await our members and visitors when they come to see our grounds and Westbury House.

We have just concluded a wonderful spring, which included better than usual weather, increased visitation, and some exciting new developments, the most important of which is officially acquiring the entire 35 acres formerly owned by our founder, Peggie Phipps Boegner. Much appreciation goes to Nassau County, which purchased the development rights to the parcel and laid the groundwork for our once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to purchase this property. We have received a portion of the funds required to reduce the loan amount. I am so grateful to the family members, trustees, advisors, and friends who have already stepped forward to contribute. We have a chance, in fond memory of Peggie, to protect open space around Old Westbury Gardens. Their generosity brings us closer to that goal.

I am also excited about two new additions to our staff, Maura Brush as our Director of Horticulture and Doreen Banks as our Director of Development. Both Maura and Doreen bring incredible experience and enthusiasm to their respective positions, and both have hit the ground running! I wish to extend a warm welcome to them both.

The wonders of the spring did not stop there. The Gardeners' Fair was a tremendous success. This year's gala highlighted the restoration of the pool colonnade. In conjunction with this project, the entire landscape between the terrace and colonnade was regraded and replanted. The Garden Committee, working closely with the Preservation Committee and landscape architect Richard Gibney, have chosen a design which will visually improve this area of the garden and, even more importantly, correct the drainage issues which have plagued the colonnade infrastructure.

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President's Letter

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A highlight of the season was our hosting of the Frick Museum's Directors' Circle, featuring the first sit-down dinner in Westbury House's dining room in nearly sixty years. Kim Johnson, our Walled Garden supervisor, Scott Lucas, our greenhouse and display supervisor, and Maura Brush were on hand to answer questions – of which there were many – and took the group on a walking tour of the grounds. Our guests were officially welcomed by Mary and Howard Phipps on the West Porch, and were treated to a wonderful talk on the close personal and business ties between the Frick and Phipps families by Frick Chief Curator Colin B. Bailey. He also revealed some fascinating details about Westbury House's architecture and art collections. Bringing our two organizations together in this unique way on a warm June evening (with our house and gardens truly looking at their loveliest) resulted in a magical event.

Summer kicked off in grand fashion, with Old Westbury Gardens conducting its first-ever Free Day on July 4th. I wish to extend a sincere thank you to North Fork Bank for totally underwriting this "family friendly" event. Attendance was double the expected number. Over 1800 people came to the Gardens! There was even a traditional Independence Day concert performed by North Shore Pops.

There are many exciting activities and developments planned in the months ahead. We will continue to refine and expand on our schedule as we find events suited to Old Westbury Gardens; so be sure to update your calendars. This Labor Day weekend we will put on our very first Mozart Festival, an event we plan on hosting every year. I hope to see you there, or possibly with your dogs in October at our Fall Dog Festival.



Our New Director of Horticulture, Maura Brush

John Norbeck, President and CEO of Old Westbury Gardens, recently announced the appointment of Old Westbury Gardens' Grounds Supervisor, Maura Brush, to the position of Director of Horticulture, effective May 9, 2007.

A lifetime Long Islander, Maura has had an enthusiastic interest in horticulture ever since she first visited Old Westbury Gardens as a seven year old. She began her first job, at fifteen, at a local nursery in Hewlett. She went on to attend the University of Maine, and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Landscape Horticulture. During summer breaks, Maura worked at Hicks Nursery in Westbury.

Following an internship at the Gardens, Maura began her full time employment in the summer of 2000 in the Cutting Garden. Six months later, she became a Mansion Gardener. In 2001, she was made Grounds



Maura at the Gardeners' Fair

Supervisor, a position she held until her recent appointment as Director of Horticulture.

Maura, who is as comfortable giving horticultural talks and presentations as she is supervising work on the grounds, is a perfect fit for her new position, and is very enthusiastic about the opportunity.

"The 'bones' of these beautiful gardens were laid out over a hundred years ago; and anyone would be hard pressed to improve upon them. I intend to cultivate the landscape architect's original design, enhancing the overall maintenance of the property to fulfill his vision. If each year brings the gardens closer to that vision – a century in the making – I will consider my job done."



Guest enjoying a tour the Walled Garden... and dinner in the Dining Room

Phipps and Fricks Dinner

On June 14, Mary and Howard Phipps hosted a dinner at Westbury House. The evening honored the continuing friendship between the Phipps and Frick families which dates back over a hundred years to the partnership between Henry (Harry) Phipps (a grandfather of both Howard and Old Westbury Gardens' founder Peggie Phipps Boegner) and

Henry C. Frick. About 40 guests enjoyed drinks, hors d'oeuvres, a tour of the Walled Garden, a series of talks in the West Porch, and an elegant dinner. In one of many interesting aspects of this special occasion, dinner was served in the dining room, the very room in which Harry and Henry and their families had shared meals together when it was part of the Phipps home on Fifth Avenue, prior to being moved to the John S. Phipps estate in Old Westbury in 1927.



New Director of Development

In late May, John Norbeck, President and CEO of Old Westbury Gardens, announced the appointment of Doreen Banks as our new Director of Development. Doreen was previously the Nassau County Commissioner of Parks, Recreation, and Museums. She has also held elected positions in the Town of North Hempstead and Nassau County.

Doreen, who also plans to become a Master Gardener, found her passion for historic preservation through her involvement with Nassau County owned historic properties. As a result of her efforts, the Guggenheim estate in Sands Point is now listed on the National Historic Register with a special designation allowing the County to apply for federal grants. Doreen also obtained funding from New York State for exterior work on Cedarmere and Elderfields, and for a cultural landscape report for Nassau Hall. She has also raised many thousands of dollars of donated services from the private sector, including for replacement of drainage systems at Chelsea, extensive pruning of a pinetum at Nassau Hall, and for renovations at Malcolm House, a Quaker farmhouse built in 1850.

“Old Westbury Gardens is the perfect example of proper stewardship of a historic property. Chairman Mary Phipps and



Doreen (right) with Development Vice Chairman Carol Large and Michael N. Doti from North Fork Bank

the Board of Trustees have continued to preserve the country estate of Jay Phipps. In addition to the home and furnishings which perfectly portray life in an American country estate of the early 20th century, it is a showcase for garden design, and it’s

the best argument for preserving open space. Old Westbury Gardens has been saved for the appreciation and enjoyment of the public. I feel honored to be joining an organization with people so dedicated to this worthy mission.”

July 4th Free Day

On Independence Day, Old Westbury Gardens celebrated America’s first day of being free with a free day. Courtesy of North Fork Bank, no admission fees were charged on July 4. Visitors brought picnic lunches or had hot dogs and burgers at our Café in the Woods. The North Shore Pops Concert Band entertained with a traditional, small town, afternoon concert filled with patriotic songs. Children’s events included nature tours and craft making. Our Plant Shop (which has shut down until September) had a final sale, with all plants at 50% off. This was a perfect opportunity for visitors, many of whom were first timers here, to enjoy a change of pace on July 4th. By escaping the beach traffic, having all these activities available, and being able to relax on 200 bucolic acres of meadows, lakes, and beautiful gardens, many new visitors will no doubt return, and likely become Gardens’ members.

Preserving the Boegner Property

Although we need to raise a total of \$3.1 million, Old Westbury Gardens is happy to announce the completion of a Challenge Grant issued by the Gerry Trust. Thanks to generous family members of Peggie Phipps Boegner, the Board of Trustees, advisors, Emeritus Trustees and friends, we have met the challenge goal of \$400,000. This will produce a \$100,000 donation by the Trust. Between this effort and previous gifts that came in before we received the Challenge, Old Westbury Gardens has raised a total of \$1.2 million to date. The Gardens will continue to pursue government and private foundation



Some of the unique structures on the Boegner property

grants and seek individuals with an interest in preserving open space. Because this 35 acre parcel and Old Westbury Gardens is in a New York State designated Special

Groundwater Protection Area, everyone on Long Island who depends on aquifers should be interested in their long term protection. To find out more about this opportunity, please contact Doreen Banks at dbanks@oldwestburygardens.org or call 516-333-0048 X335.



A heron perches on one of his favorite spots on the swan boat on the West Pond...Lambi the antelope on break during a photo shoot



Musicians play a wedding march in the Garden of Appreciation



Photographer Annie Liebowitz on a magazine shoot on the Lake Trail



The Cottage Garden begins to bloom . . . The Westbury House ivy gets a trim



The re pool is



Yoga on the South Terrace lawn

An art student is inspired by the West Pond



The Palm House is little girl's birthday party. Gardens Chairman Ma a moment with N.Y. Tim

Spring into Summer at The Gardens



A commercial shoot near the Ghost Walk



An audience settles in for a Picnic Pops performance by The Daytrippers....a garden tour begins



A dogwood tree blooms in the Walled Garden



Renovation of the lawn above the pond is complete



Tables decorated for a party... Old Westbury photographer Bill Cunningham



A cart is filled with flowers from our cutting garden for arrangements in Westbury House



Alabaster Lamp Restoration

Bob Hussey, a frequent visitor to Old Westbury Gardens and an aficionado of alabaster, noted how opaque and dull the alabaster lamps in the West Porch had become. He stepped forward with an offer to help restore the set of five lamps. Paul Hunchak, Director of Public Programs and Visitor Services, tracked down Dawn Ladd of Aurora Lampworks in Brooklyn through a recommendation provided by Lyndhurst, the historic site on the Hudson. Her firm has over twenty years of experience assisting the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Ca D'Zan (the Ringling Museum of Art in Florida), and the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. As Aurora's staff began examining the lamps, they noted that some of the alabaster had severe cracks, gilding had worn off the chains and lions' heads, and brass chains had been replaced with steel



The Aurora lights going out

chains that were badly rusting. Three lamps were of a set and the remaining two were slightly different. It's possible that some lamps came from the former South Porch when the Red Ballroom was expanded and were used in the West Porch when that area was enlarged.

The lamps were carefully dismantled and packed for their trip to the Aurora Lampworks Studio for painstaking cleaning, consolidation of cracks, regilding metalwork, and rewiring. One reason the alabaster becomes opaque is the simple heat of the incandescent light bulb which "bakes" the relatively soft stone. The con-

servator recommended using small fluorescent bulbs to cut down on heat and to help keep the stone stable. We don't usually think of stone expanding or shrinking with cold and heat; but it is a highly reactive material. The conservators also reinforced the interior of the lamps with a clear fiberglass fabric that will help the alabaster support the weight of the lions' heads and chains.

The restored lamps add a soft, warming glow to the West Porch. With regular care, they will continue to enhance that space for years to come.

Chambers Players International Presents the Long Island Mozart Festival, September 1-3

This wonderful festival has found its perfect venue – Old Westbury Gardens. The Labor Day Weekend festival will feature the finest in performances of the music of Mozart. Activities include arts, crafts, music lectures, activities for young people, a wide selection of gourmet food, and garden and house tours. To help bring an authentic 18th century Austrian feel to the Gardens, there will be period dance lessons (minuet anyone?), Punch and Judy shows, fencing demonstrations, and an assemblage of actors dressed as historical figures.

On Friday night, August 31, there will be an Opening Night Gala, with a champagne reception and dinner honoring Mary and Howard Phipps. (Call for more information). Each day Saturday through Monday, there will be a Young Peoples' Concert at 12:30am, featuring talented orchestras and choral groups from local high schools and youth organizations, fol-



The Kendre Trio... the Orchestre de Chambre Francais

lowed by the Main Stage performances at 3pm. In addition to Mozart, works by Vivaldi, Bach, Chopin, Haydn, and other composers will be included. Artists include violinist Anna Rabinova, pianists Alexander Panizza and Tatiana Goncharova, and the Orchestre de Chambre Francais. Also featured will be Long Island's own, Kende Trio. The three sisters, violinist Alexis, Crista, who plays viola and piano, and cellist Daniela, have been delighting audiences at the Gardens for over ten years.

For each of the three days of the fes-



tival, Old Westbury Gardens' members will be admitted at a special discounted price of \$5.00. As always, children 6 and under are free.



Tai chi

Recent Wednesday morning visitors to the Demonstration Gardens area may be wondering about the loosely clad group of individuals moving in slow motion unison to the soft strains of traditional Chinese music. Your suspicions are correct: tai chi has come to the Gardens.

From the Mandarin tai chi chuan, meaning “supreme ultimate boxing” or “boundless fist,” tai chi is technically a martial art. But most of the many versions, including the Yang style taught here, are strictly forms of exercise and relaxation. The stretches, postures, fluid movements, and breathing techniques meld into a type of moving meditation, so much so that, according to instructor Linda Cafiero, tai chi is sometimes thought of as “Chinese yoga,” and a means by which to “lose your mind and come to your senses.”

Linda has been teaching at various local spas and fitness and wellness centers for over ten years. In addition to tai chi, she is certified in yoga, reiki, chi-kung, and other stress management disciplines. Like Lorili Henry, who has been teaching yoga at the Gardens for three years, Linda finds the atmosphere here to be particu-



Tai chi near the Demonstration Gardens

larly complimentary to the teaching of the various techniques. In fact, since many students enjoy the experience of remaining on the grounds long after the lessons are over, Linda has begun to follow up her classes with informal, meditative walks through the gardens.

Classes, which will continue through the end of August, are open to all levels of interest and ability, from first timers who just want to try something different for a day, to more advanced students already well versed in all eight movements of the “Embrace the Moon” form. For Old Westbury Gardens’ members, classes are only \$3 each.



Presenting the beetles

What’s Bugging the Gardens

In an effort to combat the spread of aphids and other leaf-eating bugs, the Old Westbury Gardens Horticulture staff and Bartlett Tree Service have embarked on an interesting and environmentally responsible method of pest control – beneficial insects. In three mid-month applications, June through August, a total of approximately 75000 insects will have been released, including Convergent Lady Beetles, Green Lacewings, and Predacious Mites. The good bugs have been released in the Linden Allées (at the main entrance and near the South Gate) at a height of 50 to 60 feet at 32 separate locations. Members of our staff and Bartlett’s will monitor the results of the program, which we anticipate will be successful, and a means by which to minimize the use of insecticides.

Garden Art

The grounds of Old Westbury Gardens are a painter’s paradise. Whether you are a botanical artist whose passion is capturing the essence of a single flower or you prefer brushing landscape scenes en plein air “in the open air,” the wealth of creative inspiration here is almost overwhelming.

Rose Pellicano, who studied at the Parsons School of Design, has been teaching botanical art at the Gardens for six

years. Rose’s work has been included in numerous juried exhibitions of the American Society of Botanical Artists, and is in the permanent collection of the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a division of Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburg. During the month of July, visitors to Westbury House were treated to a viewing of the works of 12 of Rose’s students in an exhibition on the West Porch.

Plein air oil painting classes are being presented by instructor Bart Deceglie on the first four Fridays in August. In addition to being an artist in his own right, Bart teaches art at the prestigious Pratt Institute.



A botanical painting by one of Rose’s students



**The Dianne Wittlinger
Memorial Tree Fund
and
The Volunteer Tree Fund**

Donations to both funds have been received from March –July 2007 in memory of the individuals as follows:

- Laura Berkeley
- Stanley Brekne
- Vera Devine
- Florence Dwyer
- Alfred Ellison
- Edward Faini
- George Ferrara
- John Gerowski
- Thelma Helfer
- Margaret Jones
- Justin Kelly
- Marion Rosenthal
- Milton Stern
- Victoria Worthley
- Pasqualine Zaino

Looking ahead to Fall

On September 29, Poetica Musica will present a program titled Bach, Beethoven and Beyond. As usual, there will be a tour of the house and gardens at 6:45pm, followed by a pre-concert talk at 7:30. The performance at 8:00 will include the works of Bach, Beethoven, Grieg, Schubert, and others, and will be followed by a reception in the West Porch. The final Poetica concert of the year will be held on October 20.

In October, Old Westbury Gardens will really be going to the dogs. Dog Agility Trails sponsored by the Ladies Kennel Association will be run on October 6-7. A Fall Dog Festival will be held on October 20-21. Details will be featured in the next issue of our Calendar of Events and on our website.

Also brewing in the Fall, a Doll Tea will be held on November 17. Call now to reserve your spot at the table for this very popular event, or for one of the Teas and Tours held during our Holiday Celebration in December.



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(1906-2006)

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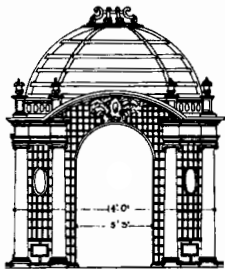
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Calendar of Events

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SUMMER 2007

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