

A Narrative History of the Southampton Garden Club

by Barbara H. Lord, 2002

We've been very fortunate in finding old minutes and articles about the Garden Club, thanks to past presidents Laurie Carson and Anne Nordeman. Also many thanks go to Dominique Buaron for all her help as well. Some of the old scrapbooks were falling apart and Dominique has put them in acid-free paper. There are many old photographs and articles from the newspapers about the Garden Club. I came across names of my family and was surprised to see my own name winning a ribbon in a flower arrangement class! Camille Campbell also entered a children's class called "A Bouquet of Long Ago" and won a second prize! Lolly Goodrich won first!

I found a charming little booklet written by Ella R. DeWitt in 1930 about the beginnings of the Southampton Garden Club, and also an article in the *New York Times* condensing the history of the Club up to 1938. I'll read you some of both, adding some things from the minutes and a few of my own anecdotes as well.

I'll start with Ella DeWitt's account: The Southampton Garden Club was born on February 13, 1912 with annual dues of \$5.00. On August 6, 1913, we became a member of the Garden Club of America. Mrs. Albert Boardman was the first President. The first meeting was held on June 30th and nine meetings were held during the summer of 1913. In those days, meetings took place every two weeks until they "resolved that they should take place at intervals of three weeks." The ladies at one meeting gave papers on their favorite color flower! Ella DeWitt, not possessing a garden, gave a paper of appreciation.

Picking up and paraphrasing from the *New York Times*: During 1914, attention was given to the planting and beautification of neglected tracts of land especially around railroad stations. Prizes were awarded for the best-kept village gardens, store fronts, etc., with suitable money prizes awarded. Under existing wartime conditions, the Club took part in a patriotic movement for the conservation of food and for the encouragement of agriculture. A gift of \$100 was sent to France to assist in replanting fruit trees. During the season of 1918, in cooperation with permanent residents of the Village, much was done towards beautifying the grounds of the Hospital, assisting in the Canning Kitchen and sending aid to France.

Meetings took place regularly until September 12, 1921. The Treasury had \$95 in it and \$80 was due the GCA for dues. Mrs. Harry Pelham Robbins, President, asked the GCA "if, by paying a yearly contribution, could we lie dormant in the parent organization?" The reply was negative, but individual members could become members-at-large and 12 ladies elected to do so. The death of so many of its leading spirits and the paralyzing effect of the war sapped the Club's vitality and caused its demise.

After a lapse of eight years, a meeting was held on August 13, 1930 at the residence of Mrs. Robert Waller, for the purpose of reorganizing the SGC and to apply to the GCA for reinstatement. Mrs. Frederick A. Snow was elected President and the dues were \$10. Attention was at once directed to improvement of the grounds and flower beds of St. Andrew's Dune Church. Mrs. Henry Trevor, Lisa Gillespie's great-grandmother, and Mr. Edward P. Mellon, Craigh Leonard's grandfather, suggested that the SGC undertake the job, and the Club voted to do a memorial garden in memory of one of its founding members, Mrs. Peter Wycoff. It was finally completed in 1932. The Trustees of the Church took care of its upkeep and it more or less stayed the same until 1987. I make it sound a lot simpler than it was—things died, the soil wasn't right, etc.

I'll continue with the rest of the Dune Church project. In 1984, Zone III asked all of its 22 clubs to participate in a Landscape Design Project. As 1984-85 was the Year of the Ocean, Ann Fletcher, the SGC President at the time, appointed Dudley Mason to create a design. Dudley chose the Dune Church as her site and drafted a spectacular design which won the Zone's first prize. The design then went to the GCA Annual Meeting and was in competition with the winners of all the 12 Zones and came in third. Ann Fletcher tried for the Founder's Fund hoping to win the \$15,000 award. Unfortunately, we came in fourth. When Mrs. Magowan heard, she and her family offered to give us the money to implement the garden, with five years of maintenance, in memory of her husband.

James Lynch & Co. donated the water system and Dudley began her plan. It was dedicated in June of 1987. It looked a lot different then, trial and error to see what would withstand the winters, but it developed eventually into the beautiful garden you see today, with thanks not only to Dudley Mason but also to Laurie Carson, the late Lee Lisman and to Evie Leonard who oversees its upkeep today.

Back to the newspaper... Steps were taken to cooperate with the Southampton Horticultural Society, made up of estate superintendents, in making arrangements for its 24th annual exhibition. These were two-day shows in which the ladies of the SGC exhibited – donations “from the ladies of the Cottage Colony” were listed in the program as were those from the Seedmen and the Local Merchants. Cash prizes ranged from \$30 for best Dinner Table done by professionals to \$1.00 for 12 Kohrabi! “One of the featured groups of exhibits at the show and one in which the summer colonists invariably show the greatest amount of interest is the competition for table settings by maids and butlers”— 1st prize was \$20. Listed in the program were 192 classes! Cut flowers, pot plants, vegetables, table settings, breakfast trays, children's classes—a bit of everything.

In 1920, there was to be a Dahlia Show at the Meadow Club, but two days before, it was called off because of the drought. The same thing happened in 1931. No rain so they finally gave up trying to have them.

A campaign was begun to eliminate the unsightly outdoor advertising and road signs. There was a Roadside Committee, and at the request of the GCA, our Club, along with others, was registered as being interested in billboard and roadside conservation. At the September 1931 Annual Meeting, the Roadside Committee reported that 17 signs had been removed and the Wild Flower Committee had scattered seeds by the roadsides.

In commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington, it was planned to cooperate with the American Tree Association in a suitable planting of trees in Southampton. The George Washington Memorial Planting Committee was formed with Mrs. Henry Torney as Chairman. It was decided to plant trees south of the War Memorial. The SGC authorized the Committee to spend \$300 on trees. Mrs. Littlejohn suggested that those wishing to contribute a tree should send \$3.00 to Mrs. Torney. In April, 1934, Mrs. Torney reported that \$234 had been raised for more trees. Mr. Vair donated Crabapple trees. At the July 18, 1934 meeting it was reported that the trees needed higher stakes and further attention. \$100 was allocated for their care. At the August meeting the report was that the Crabapple trees died, and would not be replaced.

In 1932, Miss Edith Newbold, Chairman of the Wild Flower Committee, reported on the work done among 1,200 school children. Specimens of wild flowers were collected and properly catalogued and prizes awarded. (In 1985, the SGC sponsored a "Water Conservation" Poster Contest for 3rd and 4th graders through the local school's art and science departments. There were about 50 participants and all the posters were clever and imaginative. Diane Benjamin, Marcia Cavanaugh and Barbara Lord were the judges and money was awarded 1st, 2nd and 3rd places.)

To go back to the '30s...An attack was made on tent caterpillars, ragweed and poison ivy. The village was most helpful in waging war against them. The work among the school children begun by Miss Newbold, and so energetically directed by her for several years, has recently been carried on under the able guidance of Mrs. Albert Loening. Mrs. Loening, with the cooperation of Mrs. Raymond Corwith of the Old Town Garden Club has greatly stimulated the interest of the children in wild flowers and nature study. During 1934, a member from the public schools was sent to the Audubon Camp at the expense of the Club. This was done for several years. The Wild Flower Committee continued to have shows until 1956. Miss Rosalie Coe was the last Chairman as far as I could determine.

In 1935, an article appeared in a newspaper headlined, "SAVE THE ELMS – MASS MEETING. Garden Club Invites All to Hear Expert Lecture on Dutch Elm Disease". It was held in the Grade School auditorium. All residents of Southampton Township were invited to attend. (In 1960, a Tree Committee was formed to find suitable trees to replace the elms.)

Under the direction of the Roadside Committee, prizes were offered annually for the most attractive landscaping around filling stations. On January 14th, 1937, the SGC was officially notified of its readmission to the GCA and has ever since taken an active part in the work of that organization.

This is the end of the article in the newspaper, with some additions from me. I'll continue with things taken from the minutes.

Throughout the minutes, there was always a discussion about revising the By-Laws—e.g., raising the dues, adding new members, adding or subtracting from the Executive Committee, how to vote for new members, etc. Nothing much has changed! In 1936, Mrs. Littlejohn was awarded the first Tri-Color ribbon for the stage setting of Aunt Polly Sayre's Garden (There's a photo in one of the scrapbooks). The GCA would sponsor an International Flower Show each year and garden clubs were invited to enter. The SGC always did and won many prizes. In 1942, an Herb Garden was exhibited and won a first; in March 1947, we took a third; in 1952, Mrs. Loening won a first for her Clematis vine and in 1962, Mrs. Sillcox and Mrs. Abbott won a first for their garden. A picture in the 1961-62 scrapbook shows it in color and a telegram tells what was in it. They'd send their gardeners and a carpenter, sometimes costing hundreds of dollars before they were finished, but cost didn't matter as long as they came home with a ribbon!

At the 1934 Flower Show, there was a tea room—in charge was Mrs. John Thomas Smith and the hostesses were Audrey Jaeckel, Doris Merrill, Mary and Alice Schumacher and Amy Aspegren, all members eventually of the Garden Club. Audrey is Mrs. Henri Lake, Doris was Mrs. Robert Magowan, Mary is Mrs. Jose Ferrer, Alice is Mrs. John Sturges and Amy was Mrs. Bruce Harvey.

At the August 13, 1937 meeting of the Executive Committee, the minutes read: "After the expenses of the Flower Show were paid, a balance of \$50 was left which will be donated to the Flower Show for next year." So, ladies, don't get discouraged about a small profit! At a September 15th meeting, 19 members attended but no secretary, so no minutes were taken.

In the 40s there was a house tour of 12 houses in June for visiting garden clubs. It began at the Irving Hotel at 2:30 and went on until 6:00 when all the ladies ended up at the Irving Hotel for tea and cocktails.

In 1941, Mrs. Littlejohn gave one acre for planting a Victory Garden of herbs. It was called a Knotted Garden. All members were asked to give a day a week for maintenance. Those with gardeners sent them and others volunteered, along with ladies from The Old Town Garden Club. All profits from the sale of seeds and plants were given to the Hampton Chapter of the Red Cross.

In the scrapbooks you will see photographs of a Wild Flower Show. In 1942, an article in the *Southampton Press* tells how it increased in size and was "now 500 entries".

In 1952, Mrs. Charles B. Belt started two projects. One was the Tour of houses, a big money maker for the club and the other was the Rose Show. It was held in June and was very popular, and was separate from the Flower Show, which was usually held towards the end of July. The Rose Show continued until 1958 when it was probably taken over by the Rose Society.

In 1952, at the July meeting, there was a hobby show at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Markoe (the former Mrs. Littlejohn). The following hobbies were displayed and each member gave a short talk about them: Dried flowers by Rosalie Coe; Decoupage by Mrs. Alida Agar; the Language of Flowers by Mrs. Markoe; examples of flowers in early and modern needlework; paintings by members (there were six of them); the Use of Flowers in Church Symbolism by Mrs. Hawke; Flowers Used in Opera and the Inspiration of Flowers to Poets, both the above by Mr. Markoe.

In July 1955, there was a two-day show sponsored by the Eastern Long Island Flower Division of the National Association of Gardeners held in Riverhead. The SGC, Old Town Garden Club, Southampton Horticultural Society and seven other garden clubs participated to benefit the Suffolk County Hospitals. The SGC and Old Town took prizes in every class.

In 1958, Mrs. Laughlin recommended that a 17th century Herb Garden be made in back of the "Hollyhocks" which is now the Halsey House. It became a community project, with the VIAS helping to restore the well, the Old Town Garden Club gave a bridge party to raise funds and many individuals contributed boxwood and herbs. Mrs. Laughlin planted the herbs in June 1959. Through the 60s and 70s the Club contributed money towards its upkeep.

In 1962, there was a general discussion of the possibility of the SGC giving an Herb Border to the American Museum in Bath, England, known as Claverton Manor. It was going to cost \$2,000, and it was stipulated that the SGC must pay the maintenance for the first three years. The Garden Club pledged the \$2,000. And individual contributions were made towards the three-year upkeep. Mrs. Laughlin was put in charge of everything to do with the Herb Garden and Mrs. Allen Sillcox, who was the President went to the opening in 1964. If you ever go to Bath, do stop by the American Museum. The rooms replicate life in the colonies during British rule. The Herb Garden blooms today and is worth seeing. There is a letter from Mrs. Erastus Corning, President of the GCA, praising the SGC for the outstanding Herb Garden at Bath.

In October 1963, Mrs. Edgar Leonard, President of the VIAS, appropriated \$4,000 for the restoration of the Pelletreau House on Main Street. The Southampton Colonial Society did the work of restoring it and the Garden Club planted a small garden in the back. In 1975, Diana Benjamin reported that a new fence was installed and the garden would be fixed up with new plants for the Bicentennial.

In the 70s Pauline Sullivan Orr, as President, organized a two-day Flower Show and Festival held at the Meadow Club in conjunction with the Southampton Horticultural Society and local nurserymen. They made gardens outside which were judged. There was a cocktail party the night before at the Meadow Club with five different boutiques with needlepoint pillows, garden ornaments, etc. It was an enormous undertaking but everyone enjoyed it and it netted close to \$6,000. Another two-day show was held the following year at the Sacred Hearts School on Hill Street.

Diana Benjamin was Chairman of the Horticultural Committee in the 70s and accomplished a great deal. She planned and landscaped the corner of the Rogers Memorial Library (now owned by the Parrish Art Museum), planned and landscaped the planting to beautify the new storage room at the Museum and organized a Civic Planting Project along the tracks from the bridge to the Railroad Station. A new flagpole was bought and erected for the Railroad Plaza. The planting around it had a red, white and blue theme.

For the Bicentennial of Southampton in 1976, Diana not only had the Railroad Plaza planted but designed the Herb Garden at the Old Mill Museum in Water Mill. A brick walk had been installed and shrubs planted and lots of people visited it. As the Old Mill changed, the Herb Garden was neglected until 1997, when Lisa Gillespie's 3rd grade class at Hampton Day School spent the year studying herbs as a science project. They planted the garden and you remember the exhibit at the Flower Show that year, which won the Educational Award from the GCA. That garden, too, has disappeared.

Another project Diana Benjamin took on was preparing a master plan and map for the Arboretum at the Parrish Art Museum. On the map, #31, you can see where a pink dogwood was planted. It was given by the SGC in memory of Mrs. William Cogswell, the mother of Cynthia Johnston and Ann Vose. She was very active in the SGC, chairing many committees, and was instrumental in overseeing the planting around the Nurse's Residence at the Hospital in memory of Miss Margaret Wheelwright, another long-time member of the SGC.

In 1963, Mrs. Mary Goodrich was President of the Garden Club. Unfortunately, she died while in office. In 1965, Mrs. James Wallace announced at a meeting that she was making a donation of \$100 to the American Museum Herb Garden in Bath, England in memory of Mrs. Goodrich.

This brings me to the end of this tale, not because we were dormant as a Club in the 80s and 90s, far from it, but many of us here worked on the projects at that time and are still doing so today. It is in fact, history in the making. Also, we need to leave something for someone else to regale you with!

The Narration Continues, 1980-2010

by Joann Hackett Lisman & Cindy Willis, 2010

Throughout the 1980s the Southampton Garden Club continued many of its long-standing traditions. For example, it held annual flower shows every July, where members could present their work in various Horticulture and Flower Arrangement classes, inspired by creative and fun themes. The 1980 flower show was held at the home of Ruth Adinsell, and while that year's theme has been lost to history, in 1981 the "**Summertime**" flower show was held at Parrish Memorial Hall. It was chaired by Mrs. John Sullivan, who was assisted by SGC president, Mrs. Hunter Goodrich, and schedules director, Mrs. Bruce Harvey. Pauline Sullivan chaired the 1982 show as well, held at Parrish Memorial Hall once again. The show's theme that year was "Around the World," and featured classes corresponding to seven different countries.

In 1984, the SGC introduced a periodic newsletter to inform members about winter events, upcoming meetings, important dates, programs, and new projects for the Club. Ten years later in 1994, President Laurie Carson named the newsletter "**Potpourri**" and began publishing it regularly each quarter. It continues today to cheerfully keep all members aware of all things Garden Club!

In 1985, Dudley Mason was asked to redesign the landscaping at St. Andrew's Dune Church for the SGC's submission to the Garden Club of America (GCA) Founders Fund Award competition. While the project did not win the Founders Fund, it did win the Zone III Landscape Design Project award. The project was commended for its overall plant presentation, the usage of erosion-free and drought-resistant plant material, and for coordinating so well with GCA's "**Year of the Ocean**" theme. As an additional project in harmony with that year's GCA theme, the SGC sponsored a Water Conservation Poster Contest for local 3rd and 4th graders. About 50 students entered the contest, and the winning poster, chosen by Barbara Lord, Diana Benjamin and Marsha Crawford, was exhibited at the SGC's 1985 flower show, "**A Day in the Country**". The show itself was notable because it revived the flower show/garden tour combination which has continued annually, with a few rest and recovery years, to this day.

The SGC enjoyed much success with the expansion of its imaginative activities and projects in 1986, although the theme of that year's flower show cannot be found. Fun and useful workshops were added to the Club's schedule, such as the first meeting to make Christmas decorations, which was held that December. Throughout 1986 the SGC proudly expanded its local civic and conservation projects, and efforts were made on behalf of the Parrish Art Museum Arboretum, the Water Mill Museum Bicentennial Herb Garden, and the upkeep of plantings at the Rogers Memorial Library. Mrs. Magowan generously underwrote a garden in memory of her late husband to support the St. Andrews' Dune Church landscape project, and in 1987 the SGC dedicated the Dune Church garden with a marble plaque inscribed in memory of Robert Magowan.

The SGC celebrated the 50th anniversary of our re-admittance to the Garden Club of America national organization, from which we had withdrawn in 1921. Additionally in 1987 the flower show and garden tour, themed "**Color Fantasy**," was recalled by members at that time as "*an artistic and financial success.*" The Club netted about \$3,500, and approximately 400 people attended. This show marked the first time that non-SGC members were invited to lunch. Anne McIlvaine won seven times in the Horticulture Class, including the GCA Catherine Beatty Medal. That same year, the SGC sponsored many other projects to underwrite the upcoming 1988 Zone III Meeting planned to take place in Southampton. Projects included the first ever bridge tournament, boutique sale, tag sale, and raffle.

The 1988 Zone III meeting, chaired by the very able Julie Kammerer and Barbara Lord, was a great success. Twenty-two clubs in New York State sent representatives to the meeting. Members from the time recall that "*Seventy-seven ladies arrived and had a wonderful, interesting and informative time. The invitations were lovely, clear and concise; the flower show was staged beautifully, the iced tea and cookies made a big hit, the private dinner parties elicited nothing but compliments, and there were many raves about the gift bags and their contents.*" A big highlight that summer was when David and Helga Dawn won the Jane Righter Rose Medal at the GCA annual meeting in Detroit for their "*outstanding achievement in unusual rose collections of special merit.*"

The summer season of 1989 brought the July 20th “**Summer by the Sea**” flower show, house tour, and boutique sale. The show was plagued by torrential rain and was attended by only 140 people. However, despite the inclement weather, it did manage to raise \$2,588, and Marie Donnelly won the GCA Catherine Beatty Medal in Horticulture. The rest of the summer continued to be engaging, fun, and philanthropic: the SGC sponsored its second annual bridge tournament at the Meadow Club; donated wheelchair height flower barrels to the Southampton Fresh Air Home; and co-sponsored a symposium at Southampton College, with The Nature Conservancy, on landscaping with native plants. In addition, the second annual SGC tag sale raised almost \$3,000.

In 1990, Julie Kammerer dug in and did the hard work to establish tax-exempt status for the SGC. An in-club flower show with the theme “**There’s No Business Like Show Business**” was regarded as both relaxed and fun. During this year, the Club continued to support the Southampton Fresh Air Home by donating barrels of sunflowers, wildflowers, and impatiens. The SGC also donated funds to the Village to be used for the planting of geraniums and impatiens on Main Street, Windmill Lane, Job’s Lane and in the planters at Cooper’s Beach, Bowden Square, and Monument Square.

Members were so busy in their gardens that, alas, the details of both 1991 and 1992 are lost to history, and the theme of 1993 is missing as well. However, the summer of 1993 was a busy one for the SGC: The Club began donating flower boxes to Southampton Hospital’s Nursing Home, and the SGC also started awarding a yearly \$500 scholarship to a deserving high-school senior interested in “all aspects of the garden.” Eight trees were planted in the Village to replace trees lost in the 1993 winter storms, and the Club gave the Rogers Memorial Library five horticulture and gardening reference books. Lastly, Dudley Mason established the “Flower Arranging for Prom Night” workshop at the Fresh Air Home. This workshop, which the SGC would continue to hold annually for many years, was an instant hit with the young people as well as for SGC members. As Marge Sullivan said, “*The excitement, enjoyment, and pride the children derive from their efforts are truly a joy to behold. Being part of these workshops is always a gift and an inspiration as far as the Garden Club members are concerned.*”

In 1994 the Club continued its good works with a plant sale, tag sale and bridge tournament. The theme of that year’s flower show was “**Postcards from the Beach**” Dudley Mason received the GCA Medal of Merit at the SGC’s annual meeting, and Pat Tenney won the Harriet DeWaele Puckett Creativity Award at the flower show. In addition, Jean Rimmel Little FitzSimmons initiated plans to create a garden at the Care Center Nursing Home in memory of her late husband, Buck Rimmel, with a generous donation of \$25,000. Roger Lovett was tapped to design the garden, which was planted and dedicated. Original plans included a brick walk, perennial beds, benches, lights a statue and an inscribed plaque. Donald Mahoney, a former SGC Scholarship Award winner, was hired to maintain the garden.

After careful consideration, in 1995 the Club decided to increase the scholarship award from \$500 to \$1000, to further solidify community outreach. A new needlepoint rug, handmade by a dozen Club members under the direction of Barbara Lord, was raffled off on September 16th to raise money for the SGC's various civic projects, including a gift of \$1,000 for trees in Old Town Park. The same year, a major renovation of St. Andrew's Dune Church infrastructure and grounds necessitated a rejuvenation of the landscaping and gardens around the church. Laurie Carson and Dudley Mason again took the lead in the garden's design, going back to the original plans outlined years earlier; Lee Lisman further enhanced the garden the following year. Once again, the flower show's theme is missing from the collective records of the membership.

In 1996, the SGC held the "**Southampton: Our Town**" flower show at St. John's Church and, at its annual meeting in September, happily awarded the GCA Medal of Merit to Barbara Lord. That same year, the SGC began a two-year effort to restore the Water Mill Museum Colonial Herb Garden. President Marge Sullivan shepherded the project in response to the GCA's request that member clubs celebrate America's Bicentennial with a special community project. The project was a joint effort between the Southampton Garden Club and students at the Hampton Day School under the direction of Lisa Gillespie. The garden beds were cleared by the students in the fall and planted with a variety of medicinal, kitchen and fragrant herbs in the spring. The herb garden was further enhanced by generous donations of typical 18th century roses by the Southampton Rose Society and many varieties of scented-leaf geraniums by the NY Botanical Garden. The Hampton Day School students won the Marion Thompson Fuller Brown Conservation Award, and Lisa Gillespie won the Ann Lyon Crammond Education Award for this project at the 1997 "**Five Senses**" flower show, chaired by Cindy Willis and held at St. John's Church.

Also in 1997, the SGC responded to an appeal from GCA to participate in a tissue culture project on seriously endangered species. Pat Nadosy led the membership in gathering plant material to develop tissue cultures to preserve five species of orchids. On top of its many other efforts, the SGC added a Flower Arranging Committee to its list of Standing Committees, and Pat Tenney chaired the inaugural group which included Fran Dalessandro and Laurie Carson. The committee sponsored its first workshop at Lynn Mortimer's house just before Thanksgiving of that year.

In 1998 the SGC offered its ladies a restorative summer and did not hold a flower show, but instead had a very successful garden tour. A plant sale and preview party were organized to benefit Project 2000, an initiative sponsored by GCA to celebrate the upcoming millennium. For its project, the SGC chose to restore and enhance the Southampton Historical Museum Gardens. This effort was chaired by Marge Sullivan, Laurie Carson and Anne Nordeman, and was completed two years later in 2000. The Garden Club Ladies invested a generous \$40,000 on a variety of improvements, including new plantings, a more inviting entrance, a new fountain, and seating areas for visitors.

In 1999, Nevitt Jenkins chaired the "**All Things Bright and Beautiful**" flower show that year at St. John's Church, and instead of a bridge tournament, the Club held a really fun and engaging "Backgammon, Blackjack, Bridge & Buffet" party at the Meadow Club. Laurie Carson donated "Billy's Garden" on the grounds of the Historical Museum to honor the memory of her late brother, Billy Cameron.

In the spring of 2000, the SGC hosted “**A Rose Symposium: Roses for the New Millennium**”, co-chaired by Dominique Buaron and Rosalie Brinton. The gathering included an enticing variety of speakers and demonstrations, and a box lunch ensured the audience was satiated in mind and body. “**Honor the Past – Imagine the Future**” was the theme of the 2000 Millennium Flower Show, held on the grounds of the Historical Museum and chaired by Fran Dalessandro and Cindy Willis. According to the flower show report, “*There were total of 93 entries in the show, including 61 horticulture entries and 32 flower arrangements. In flower arranging, the Club was awarded a special Judges Commendation for Class IV which honored deceased member Lee Lisman. The Club was also honored by the marvelous individual success of Mrs. Robert Fear who was awarded the Garden Club of America’s Harriet DeWaele Puckett Creativity Award in recognition of a “uniquely skillful and creative response to an imaginative schedule.”* Luncheon under the tent was a huge success with 90 reservations including 35 Friends of the Locust Valley Library.

The following year, 2001, started off well with the “**Books & Flowers**” flower show at the new Rogers Memorial Library, chaired by Beatty Cramer. An ambitious and elaborate event, the show lasted two days, included a tour which visited five gardens, and included a first-ever Photography Class and Preview Party. The Preview Party, hosted by Jackie Goodwin, was a hit as it incorporated a men-only Flower Arranging Class, won by Dr. Martin Stone.

Later that summer, the SGC held a garden party and tour to celebrate and showcase the Club’s civic projects. The tour began at the Southampton Historical Museum and continued on to the gardens of St. Andrew’s Dune Church, Southampton Nursing Home, Southampton Hospital, and the Southampton Intermediate School’s Arboretum. Flower arranging workshops, organized by Janis Murphy, were held at the Fresh Air Home.

At the end of the year, the SGC received a bequest from the estate of Mrs. Magowan who left the Club \$100,000 to ensure the perpetual maintenance of the Dune Church garden she had originally donated in memory of her husband. Each year, the SGC pays for a portion of the upkeep of the garden with the investment earnings of the Magowan Fund. With great pride, the Club applauded the nomination of its most energetic member, Marge Sullivan, as Chairman of the New York Committee of GCA, a position she held with distinction for 6 years—the first SGC member to do so.

The festivities and celebrations of the 2001 summer season came to an end with the terrorist attacks of September 11th. Our members, like all citizens here and around the world, were deeply shocked and profoundly saddened by this event. As a small tribute, SCG decided to honor the victims by planting a Liberty Garden in the summer of 2002 at the fire station on the corner of 27A and St. Andrews Road. The garden was designed by Dominique Buaron and, with its red, white and blue theme, contains a picturesque mix of shrubs, perennials, hydrangeas, roses, and native grasses. The Reverend Peter M. Larsen performed the dedication ceremony.

In the summer of 2002, the Ladies of the Garden Club held the flower show “**The Gay Nineties – A Retrospective**” at the Rogers Memorial Library, chaired by Nancy Stone. Linda Fraser and Lynn Mortimer worked on the history of the St. Andrew’s Dune Church gardens for submission to the Smithsonian Institute’s Archive of American Gardens. The SGC sponsored a meeting on land preservation, and President Dominique Buaron went with Joanne Bilby to the GCA Annual Meeting in Dallas, where they received the maximum eighteen points at the plant exchange, thanks to Horticulture Chair Beth Treadway and other SGC members. Julie Kammerer received the GCA Medal of Merit, and Marie Donnelly won the Zone III Horticulture award.

Throughout 2003 and 2004, SGC members continued to work on their civic projects and fundraisers while also attending an interesting variety of lectures, workshops, and programs. The members began work on the Windmill Lane garden in honor of the many volunteers of the Southampton Village. They expanded the Liberty Garden by adding an irrigation system and a ginkgo tree to replace a struggling crabapple. They also contributed to the annual plantings at the Fresh Air Home, Southampton Hospital, Southampton Nursing Home, Rogers Memorial Library, and St. Andrew’s Dune Church. Dominique Buaron began a two-year term as Zone III Representative to GCA’s national Flower Show Committee. This marked the first time that an SGC member held a GCA position. Dominique went on to serve as the Zone Awards Rep from 2005 to 2007 and as Vice-Chairman of the Awards Committee from 2007 to 2009. In 2003, Marie Donnelly was honored with the Zone III Horticulture Award.

The 2003 flower show was held in June to accommodate that year’s theme: “**The Subject is Roses**”. Beatty Cramer chaired the show and Helga Dawn Frohling was the Honorary Chair. In 2004, the show moved back to in July; its theme was “**Museum Reflections**” and it was chaired by Linda Fraser. Liz Battle won the GCA’s Sandra Baylor Novice Flower Arrangement award, and Marge Sullivan was awarded the GCA Medal of Merit.

Fran Dalessandro chaired 2005’s “**Museum Inspirations**” in-club flower show, held at the Parrish Art Museum. The following year, in 2006, Fran and Linda Fraser co-chaired “**At Home with the SGC**”, the first show in many years to be held at members’ houses. At the show, Christl Meszkat won the Clarissa Willemsen Horticulture Propagation Award. Fundraising efforts included “A Sense of Wonder”, a one-woman, two-act play based on the life of Rachel Carson, which was presented to the public in October, and in November a very successful Casino Night was held at The Southampton Club, catered by SGC members.

In 2005, the Club started acting on the plan developed by a steering committee of past SGC presidents at the end of 2004, to plan the “**Beaches & Bays**” Zone III meeting that was to take place in Southampton in 2007. Hosted by a different club within GCA’s Zone III each year, Zone meetings are a major undertaking. They include a full flower show, garden tour, three days of meetings and lectures, food and lodging for up to 100 guests from throughout New York and the national GCA organization, gift bags, programs and transportation. It is no wonder that the meeting took three years to plan, cost over \$20,000, and required the combined energies of all 100 members of the SGC to organize and execute!

Looking ahead, in 2005, the SGC started to focus its attention on raising money for the meeting, to supplement the \$15,000 fund that had been set aside and added to over the years since the last SGC Zone meeting nearly 20 years before in 1988. The members sponsored plant sales, casino nights, boutique sales, and flower shows. They also created a beautiful floral needlepoint rug that was raffled off at the Zone III Awards Dinner. SGC member Eileen Powers was delighted to win the rug! A generous member also donated \$5,000 to the Beach & Bays fund, thereby ensuring that the Club could meet all its budget obligations for the meeting.

At the end of 2006, when Linda Fraser became President, the SGC received an anonymous gift from a member to endow the Scholarship Fund. This generous donation is kept in a separate fund in order to ensure that there is always money available for an annual SGC scholarship awarded to a high school student interested in pursuing an education in horticulture or a similar environmental science.

The 2007 Zone III meeting, chaired by Cindy Willis and Barbara Lord, turned out to be a great success and lots of fun for all the guests who attended. It lasted three days and included a Zone flower show and garden tour, conservation and horticulture meetings at the Southampton Inn, luncheon at the Meadow Club, dinners at Shinnecock and SGC members' homes. One night, Lynn Manger graciously hosted all 100 guests to cocktails at her oceanfront home, 'Fairlea'. The 2007 Zone III meeting was also notable because it was the first year that the Plant Exchange was held at Zone level. Now members no longer had to travel all over the country, but rather only as far as the boundaries of their Zone to exhibit their six pelargoniums. Also at the Zone flower show, Marie Donnelly won the Rosie Jones Horticulture Award, Bob Dash was awarded the Zone Horticulture Certificate, and The Group for the East End received the Zone Conservation Certificate. At the end of the meeting, the Zone III Clubs presented a Dwarf Weeping Cherry tree for the Liberty Garden to President Linda Fraser, in thanks to the SGC for hosting the meeting.

The following year, in 2008, the SGC once again hosted an event for the GCA. This time, in conjunction with our "**Southampton Stars**" flower show, Lynn Mortimer and Linda Fraser planned a garden tour for the GCA Visiting Gardens Committee in June. The group spent two days in Southampton where they visited the SGC Flower Show, the Dune Church and several Southampton gardens that had never been on tour before. The visitors also enjoyed lunch at the Meadow Club and shopping at the flower show's fabulous boutique. At this show, Christl Meszkat won the GCA Rosie Jones Hort Award.

Later that summer, the Halsey House Herb Garden, planted by the SGC many years before, was in need of attention. Five SGC members assembled to renovate the herb garden by sorting and identifying the surviving herbs and then replacing the dying ones with new plantings. Also that summer, the SGC moved their office from the Southampton Historical Museum to St. John's Church. Camille Campbell and Beth Treadway began preparing a submission for the Garden History and Design Committee to include the Meadow Club gardens and grass courts in the Smithsonian Institute's garden archives.

During the summer season of 2009, the SGC mourned the loss of its beloved president Fran Dalessandro. In her honor, Tish Bliss, acting president, and Clelia Zacharias, chaired the beautiful “**Enchanted Garden**” flower show, garden tour, and boutique in June. Out of the 142 entries in horticulture, 111 of the entries were from SGC members. Seventy members received ribbons, and the Hydrangea and the Fairy Garden-Challenge Class both received Judges’ Commendations. Lisa Gillespie received Best in Show for Horticulture and the Ann Fletcher Cup; Thea Hattrick and Joan Belden jointly won the Rosie Jones Horticulture Award.

Also that summer, the SGC began to develop and implement a Centennial Tree Project in celebration of the GCA’s approaching 100-year anniversary in 2013. Once again, past SGC presidents convened to form a steering committee for the project. Linda Fraser was appointed the Zone III Rep to the GCA’s national Awards Committee and Cindy Willis, the Zone III Rep for Public Relations.

This report brings us to 2010 and the presidency of Clelia Zacharias. So far this year, Lydia Wallis chaired the truly beautiful “**Inspirations for a Wedding**” flower show; Marge Sullivan was presented with the Zone III Horticulture award at the annual Zone meeting in East Hampton; and the SGC donated a bench to the Village of Southampton in honor of our late president Fran Dalessandro. The SGC also pledged its support of the GCA’s Centennial Founders Fund Project, to renovate the 68th Street entrance to Central Park, and the SGC made its own plans to honor Mary Louise Shields who celebrated her 103rd birthday this year and is the SGC’s oldest living member.