

Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania History

- 1929** - In response to an invitation from Mr. James Boyd, President of the PA Horticulture Society, representatives of garden clubs met on November 25th to form a Pennsylvania Federation of Garden Clubs.
- 1930** - January 30th, seventeen organizations were represented and Bylaws for the new organization were set forth.
- 1930** - March 26th, the Bylaws were ratified and an election of officers was held. Mrs. Thomas Newhall was the first President.
- 1930** - July 14th, the first regular meeting of the Executive Board was held. In the beginning the State was divided into 3 divisions - Eastern, Central and Western. A Vice-President and three Directors were selected from each Division.
- 1934** - The original plan for three divisions was changed to two by a line running north and south through the state forming an Eastern and Western Region. The Executive Board would stand basically as a whole with each Region governed by a Regional Chairman.
- 1942** - National Council Convention at Philadelphia was canceled due to war restrictions.
- 1945** - National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc. identifies the Pa Turnpike as part of the original East-West portion of the Blue Star Highway System. The first Blue Star Highway Marker in the state was dedicated February 18, 1948.
- 1946** - District I sponsored the next Highway Marker August 30, 1976. The first garden club to sponsor a marker was Monroe County Garden Club, District II, on September 7, 1976.
- 1952** - First refresher course for Accredited Flower Show Judges anywhere in the United States was given at Pittsburgh Garden Center.
- 1952** - National Council started the Hilda Fox Award of \$100 for landscaping. Hilda was founder and first president of the PA Roadside Council, known today as PA Resources Council.
- 1954** - Under advisement of National Council, the state was divided into eight Districts, each having a District Director.
- 1954** - District VI, in the process of being formed, became the first District to host a GCFP Convention at Bedford Springs Hotel.
- 1954** - At the Philadelphia Flower Show, Governor John S Fine awarded the Most Meritorious Amateur Exhibit to the GCFP.
- 1955** - GCFP awards the first Governor Trophy Award to Carrie T Watson G. C. in District VIII.
- 1956** - A pilot program for a Landscape Design School was held. From this developed the Landscape Design Schools for NCSGC. (Now NGC, Inc).
- 1957** - District VII establishes the Mary Alice Wheeler Memorial Scholarship. Indiana Garden Club had the first winner.

- 1961** - First National Convention in State held in Philadelphia.
- 1964** - GCFP sponsored the National Resources Council in Pittsburgh.
- 1966** - The first Headquarters Office was established in Harrisburg with 250 clubs and 13,748 members.
- 1968** - Pennsylvania's Bird Day became law through the efforts spearheaded by the GCFP.
- 1969** – Planted Rose Garden at Governor’s Mansion. Completed in 1970.
- 1970** - Federation received National Council’s Dean World Gardening Trophy.
- 1971** - First State Flower Show was held at the Hershey Hotel.
- 1971** - GCFP had its first National Council President, Miriam Steel. Her theme was A Cleaner, Greener Land.
- 1972** - The most devastating experience was the damage caused by Hurricane Agnes. The flood completely destroyed the office in Harrisburg and all records were lost. The office was moved to Camp Hill.
- 1975** – The GCFP purchased fire and theft insurance on the headquarter office for \$26/year.
- 1975** – The first GCFP Past President's pin was purchased for \$150.
- 1976** - The official GCFP Garden Club logo had its inception thanks to Dottie Hermani who was then District V Director.
- 1976** - Pittsburgh hosted the National Convention.
- 1977** - GCFP placed a marker in the Rose Garden at the Governor's Mansion in Harrisburg.
- 1977** - In order to conform to National Council, we reorganized our State Federation by having the officers take office in the spring of the odd-numbered years.
- 1978** - Course I, Gardening Study School (formerly Garden Study Courses under Betty Bomberger) was held June 21-22, 1978 under President Dorothy Warner. Forty-four students attended the course and 25 passed all subjects. Course II was held October 10-12, 1978 with 17 students taking the exam.
- 1987** GCFP President, Lois Shuster and Corresponding Secretary, Sarah Stuver took a one-week tour of some clubs in Eastern PA. They contacted the Presidents and asked if they could come and visit. They set aside the third week of January and visited 6 Clubs. They were so warmly greeted, and the clubs so enthusiastic about a State President visiting them that the next year they made a tour of the entire state, and in 1989 the "Tour" was set up by Districts so that all the clubs could meet with the State President and discuss what was of interest to them.
- 1987** - GCFP and the Landscape Design Society of Western PA joined forces to create an educational center at the Rachel Carson Homestead.
- 1988** – A Keep PA Beautiful Chairman, Sandy Manthorpe, works with Penn Dot to find and plant roadside sites with wildflowers.

- 1989** - For a smoother running organization, the District Directors were installed following the State Officers.
- 1989** – Membership in the GCFP was 207 clubs with 11,367 members. The organization was concerned with declining membership so they started to promote evening and weekend meetings to gain new members. The thought was that the organization was losing members because women were now going into the work force!
- 1992** - Philadelphia hosted the National Convention.
- 1995** – Reorganized our State Federation again by having the District Directors installed at the Annual District Meetings at which they are elected.
- 1996** - Course I of the first PA Environmental Studies School was held in the Harrisburg Area October 20-22 under Suzanne Reppert and Sue Dougherty of Penn-Cumberland Garden Club, District IV. Courses II and III were held in 1997 and Course IV was held in 1998 at King’s Gap Environmental Center in Carlisle, PA.
- 1997**- Gardening Study School held Course IV at Penn State University. Mrs. Betty Bomberger was the State and local chairman.
- 1999** - District VII voted to split in May and District I voted to split in November creating three new districts. District IX, District X and District XI reported for the first time at the March 5-6, 2001 State Board Meeting.
- 2001** - Lois Dupre Shuster became the second National President from PA.
- 2001** - The name of National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc. was changed to National Garden Clubs, Inc.
- 2001** - Habitat for Humanity becomes a State Board Chairmanship under President Marilyn Whitmore. Joan Lutz, The GC of Harrisburg, D-IV, is its first Chair.
- 2002** - GCFP website (pagardenclubs.org) first launched April 8, 2002. Kay Leto, Four Seasons Garden Club, District I, was the first Webmaster; Marilyn Whitmore was President. The website contained information about our purpose, the federated clubs in PA (approx. 200), the districts and their directors, state conventions, district meetings and ‘How to visit/join a garden club’.
- 2002** - Peace Garden established at the 9-11 Chapel in Shanksville, PA under President Marilyn Whitmore.
- 2003** – Children’s Peace Garden, Penny Pines and Time Capsule placed at Headquarters at the dedication of the September 11th Memorial Gardens.
- 2004** - Dr. Mary Horkowitz becomes the first Director of the newly combined District II/III.
- 2004** - IRS approves the group exemption for federated clubs on November 22. State President was Jackie Davies and State Treasurer was Donna Davis.
- 2005** - PA Turnpike re-dedicated as a Blue Star Memorial Highway on April 6 under state chairman, Barbara Dempsey and President Jackie Davies.
- 2006** - Butler Garden Club, District IX, installed the first Blue Star Marker at a veteran’s hospital. Principal Financial Group began giving grants to help fund the marker projects.

- 2007** - The Handbook for Flower Shows was revised.
- 2007** - A new version of the GCFP website was launched by Webmaster, Vina McCloud Rudolph, on April 26, following the close of the convention at which Dorthy Yard was installed as President.
- 2007** - The first Tri-Refresher in PA was held at King's Gap Environmental Center on May 10-11.
- 2010** - The Sage and Roses Fund was created by Lois Shuster, GCFP President 1987-1989, NGC, Inc. President 2001-2003. Intent is to send a greeting electronically and donate money that would be spent on a paper greeting to the fund. Donations benefit the state Blue Star Memorial Project. The acronyms stand for SAGE (Send A Greeting Electronically) and ROSES (Remember Our Servicemen's Every Sacrifice).
- 2011**- Board of Directors' meetings changed to 3/year (June, October, April), The March meeting dropped from the schedule. Angie Raitano was the GCFP President.
- 2011**- 20 students attended a Tri-Refresher held on April 10-13 in conjunction with the GCFP Convention at Skytop Lodge in the Poconos. Judy Morley was the Chairperson and Angie Raitano was GCFP President.
- 2011** - Penny Pines becomes a State Board Chairmanship under President Gail Corle. Pat Beall is its first Chair.
- 2011** – GCFP cooperated in the planning and staging of WAFA held in Boston, MA in June.
- 2012** - First set of Leadership Workshops held; one on August 1 at the Winnie Palmer Nature Center in Latrobe, PA and another on August 29 at the Reading Public Museum in Reading, PA. Some of the topics discussed were budgeting, writing an agenda, parliamentary procedure, GCFP and NGC projects and awards. Betsy Smith, Garden Club of York, District IV, was chair and Gail Corle was GCFP President. The Leadership Workshops were the inspiration of Gail Corle.
- 2013** - Randy Layton, Hazleton Area GC, D-II/III takes over the GCFP website under president Betsy Smith.
- 2014** - The Joyful Bloomers Junior Garden Club, District VII, became the first Junior Club in the nation to sponsor a Blue Star Memorial Marker. The marker was installed at Veterans' War Memorial in McKeesport, PA on May 26.
- 2014** - GCFP Club Anniversary recognitions expanded to include clubs federated for 85 years.
- 2014** - Blue Star Memorial Highway Program completed under Blue Star Chair, Rin Babson.
- 2015** - Second GCFP convention tri-refresher held on April 19-21 in Erie, PA. Judy Morley chaired the refresher; Betsy Smith, Garden Club of York, District IV, was President. 16 consultants attended.
- 2015** - Central Atlantic Region Conference held October 28-29 at the Wyndham Hotel in Gettysburg, PA; Barbara Brand, Gettysburg GC, District IV, was conference chairperson. A Flower Show Symposium was held in conjunction with the conference, Diane Herman, The Garden Club of Johnstown, District VI, chaired.

- 2016** - GCFP receives approval from US Postal Service to mail at Nonprofit Standard Mail rates on September 15 under President, Sharon Brown.
- 2017** - Keystone Gardener mailing was reduced to 3 issues per year under President Christine Leskosky.
- 2017** - National Garden Clubs, Inc. changed the names of Gardening Study School and Environmental Studies School to Gardening School and Environmental School.
- 2017** - National Garden Clubs, Inc. releases revised edition of Handbook for Flower Shows.
- 2017** - CAR becomes Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs (CAR-SGC, Inc) after incorporating in the state of Delaware (2016) and receiving its own 501 c-3 designation.
- 2018** - Copies of all GCFP Manuals placed on GCFP website.
- 2018** - May 20-24, NGC Convention held at the Loews Hotel, Philadelphia, PA. Pat Wolanski and Flossie Narducci, District I, chaired; GCFP President was Christine Leskosky.
- 2018** – September, 1st Edition of the *Keystone Kalendar* is published. Chris Leskosky, State President and Kalendar Chair.

KEYSTONE GARDENER HISTORY

December **1934** – The first Federation newsletter, *Garden News* was published as a supplement to PA Horticulture Society’s publication, *Horticulture*.

October **1941** – Publication date of the first independent newsletter

October **1951** – Publication became *The News*.

The News Editors:

1962 - 1964 Betty Forstall and Mrs. Demaree

1964 –1966 Betty Forstall and Hanne Dowd

1970 – 1972 – Virginia Ingram

1972 – 1979 - Betty Forstall and Ann Hite

June **1980** – A contest was held to rename *The News*. *Keystone Gardener* name was chosen. Louise Dimmick submitted the entry.

1979 – 1981 Jane Dole and Jean Williams

1981 – 1987 Hazelmae Hoffman and Helen Strickler

1987 – 1997 Gladys Dapp and Helen French

1997 – 1999 Susan Thatcher and Dale Murphy

1999 – 2001 Susan Thatcher and Diane Herman

2001 – 2003 Diane Hughes and Ted Hildebrand

2003 – 2005 Diane Hughes and Betty Bomberger

2005 – 2009 Marcy Cunkelman and Claire Valletta

2009 – 2011 Marcy Cunkelman and Spencer Manthorpe

2011 – 2013 Marcy Cunkelman and Barbara Lotito

2013 – 2019 Marcy Cunkelman