Hello!
Attended should be the January Newsletter. Please read Mary's hort. section ASAP - we've been invited to attend a special workshop on preparing exhibits for shows on Feb. 15th. Mary needs RSVP's by tomorrow, Feb. 9th.!! So if you want to go, let her know! Sorry to be getting this out so late! Jennifer

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The Plainfield Garden Club Newsletter

January 2001

A Message From The President...

This has been a full week for us here in the Plainfield Garden Club! Our meeting was so informative... conservationist Cindy Zipf really opened our eyes to what has been going on in the State, and what we may expect from the new administration in Washington, featuring our own Christie Whitman! I had no idea what a benefit she had been to New Jersey in terms of off-shore dumping, and what heavyweights she had been up against. I saw her last weekend at the inauguration, and she came across as the classy, intelligent lady she is.

Our in-house flower show was so pretty. I received a very flattering letter from one of the judges commending us for such a successful schedule, and how creatively our members responded to it. While I am never surprised by such accolades, I am always glad to hear them!

When we want to host a party, let’s be sure to call Karen, Diane, Susan and Beth to help us plan it, because our Annual Brunch, hosted by these four, was simply divine. Traditions like this one are what make our members realize what a special, unique group of ladies we are!

Fondly, Tucker

Horticulture

Sally Booth, Phyllis Alexander and Mary Kent are dying to know what everyone is growing from the Rosaceae family. Call us with a progress report. Here’s what we should be hearing about: spirea – workshop, October; Rosa rugosa, Aronia, Crataegus, November workshop and our meeting; hardwood cuttings from our Shakespeare Garden roses, November. Also tell us if you have done anything on your own in the way of propagating plants from this family. May comes more quickly than we think! Sow the seeds if you have not already done so. So much to grow, so little time!

We are all invited by the Engelwood Garden Club to a workshop “How To Prepare Your Exhibits for a G.C.A. Show”. It is being held at the Englewood Field Club (Mary has directions). This is for Flower Arranging and Horticulture entries – so it’s for all of us. The date is February 15th, (a Thursday) at 10:00 a.m. (refreshments will be served at 9:30 a.m.) The workshop will end at 11:30 a.m. Please respond to us if you are coming by Friday, February 9th. I must let them know our final tally by Monday, February 12th. We can carpool from Mary’s house. Sounds like a great program! RSVP Mary Kent or Sally Booth.

Re: Daffodils and Tulips from October 8th workshop: Walter Fisher has his bulbs in cold storage for 14-17 weeks. But, remember, he literally buries or refrigerates his pots. His plants are scheduled to be in bloom for the Philadelphia Flower Show. If you have been unable to provide consistently cold temps, your bulbs could be ahead of his schedule. Refer to his handout.
Shakespeare Garden Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 28th at 10:00 a.m. at Mary’s house. Please RSVP Mary Kent – 232-1566.
- Mary Kent and Sally Booth

Flower Arranging
Thanks to all for making our in-house flower show a success!

Class I
1st – Sally Kroll/Anne Shepherd
2nd – Elva Busch/Diana Madsen
3rd – Jeanne Turner/Nina Weil
HM – Phyllis Alexander

Class II
1st – Susan Fraser/Mary Kent
2nd – Ramona Ferguson
3rd – Karen Delaney
HM – Barbara Sandford

Class III
1st – Diane Carpenter/Tucker Trimble
2nd – Carroll Keating
3rd – Jennifer Higgins
HM - Beth Harbaugh

The show really showed how much talent is in our club – Englewood (May 4-5th, 2001 “Fashion In Flowers”) is calling you! Entry deadline for Engelwood show is April 1, 2001.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carroll Keating and Elizabeth Harbaugh

What We Learned:
Shortly after the flower show a suggestion was made to compile a list of any tips, tricks or just plain good ideas we gleaned from this experience. So far, only two brave souls have come forward and offered their lessons learned. If you have any flower arranging secrets to share with fellow members, send them to the editor for inclusion in upcoming issues of this newsletter. This month’s tips –

- Don’t get your heart set on using a particular flower. What inspires you a week before the show may not be available when you need it. Keep an open mind and go with what looks beautiful at showtime.
- Flowers look different at different times of day (opened/closed – turning up/down). The masterpiece you finish at 11:30 p.m. may look very different at 9:30 a.m. Be ready to make adjustments!

Conservation
An opportunity to create a Botanical Research Project Fund has come to the club’s attention. Creative botanical projects are being pursued by the students of
Plainfield High School under the direction of Ms. Toni Watt, chairperson of the science department there. More to follow next month.

This month's club meeting speaker was Cindy Zipf of Clean Ocean Action. Cindy is devoted to studying and solving the problems of ocean pollution and is an expert in her field. Her talk was most enlightening as to the progress of cleanliness of waters off NJ's coast. PGC now lists itself among a number of garden clubs in NJ who support this organization's work. To learn more about Clean Ocean Action, visit their site - cleanoceanaction.org.

Our Zone IV conservation representative, Susan Gordon, suggests that now is a good time for us, as individuals, to send a letter to acting Governor De Francesco reiterating the importance of maintaining the Meadowlands as a wetlands.

Also, since our last meeting, Conservation has received a formal request from Ricky Lang to refurbish a portion of his landscaping work done two years ago at Trailside Park. His request includes specifics as to plant material, labor needs and watering schedules.

Respectfully Submitted,
Diane Carpenter and Penny Taylor

Program
Following the fabulous Flower Show organized by Beth and Carroll we want to continue in the creative vein with a demonstration and workshop with Laurie Appel from the Garden Club of the Oranges. Laurie has been invited to enter the Flower Show at the Annual Meeting in Orlando in the Miniature Class. She is also entering the Houston Flower Show.

For our workshop, Laurie has chosen the class title: "Spring Is Coming". She would like each member to bring their own container and select their own flowers to fit a 3-sided light gray niche (back wall measures L20"xH24"xD16"). Laurie will discuss ground rules, principles of design and what judges are looking for during her demonstration. I am very excited to have Laurie critique our arrangements and give us encouragement to enter other flower shows. Please be sure to let the hostesses know if your are coming and participating in the workshop.

- Nina and Karen

Here's what's next:
April 18th, 9:00 a.m. – lunch
Shakespeare Garden
Opening Spring Clean-Up, Meeting to follow at the home of Mrs. William Weil
Please bring a sandwich

May 16th, 9:45 a.m. – coffee
Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church
Flower Arranging Demonstration
Cindy Affleck – “Tips For Exhibiting In Flower Shows”
Horticulture Show (see handbook for schedule)

**Membership**

Please note that the deadline for sending proposing and seconding letters for prospective new members is March 1, 2001. Send them to either Diana Madsen or Martie Samek. We are excited about the first provisional class in the Plainfield Garden Club.

**A Special Invitation**

Mrs. C. Austin Buck, on the garden committee of Historic Morven in Princeton, has been in touch with many of the GCA Clubs in Zone IV. She has advised us that there will be a Spring Lecture/Luncheon at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 5, 2001, at Princeton borough Hall, with a luncheon at Morven following. The speaker will be Barbara Israel on "Antique Garden Ornament" (ticket cost $60.00). Ms. Israel recently published a book, *Antique Garden Ornament: Two Centuries of American Taste*, presenting a wealth of information on American gardens and their ornament from 1740 to 1940. She has served as a consultant to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and has worked with Winterthur, the Smithsonian and Baltimore Museum of Art. For information, call 609-683-4495 (Pam Ruch at Morven).

Additionally, there will be a Spring Historic Plant Sale on Saturday, May 5th, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. emphasizing historic plants. Mrs. Buck has also asked if there is interest among our members in helping by gardening amongst historical plant varieties at Morven and help in planning for the plant sale. Call Diana Madsen for more information.

**Did you know . . .**

- That while you were trying to get your amaryllis to bloom at the precise moment your holiday holiday guests walked through the door, Elva Busch "opened up the December issue of the GCA Bulletin and was enjoying the colorful section on holiday decorations. I was thinking that it was a shame our club wasn’t in the article. Then I turned the page and there we were! Imagine my surprise seeing a picture of Nina and I making Christmas wreaths at our workshop! Thanks, Tucker, for including us in the holiday issue!"

Do you have something to include in the next newsletter? Send submissions to Jennifer Higgins, 187 Old Short Hills Road, Short Hills, NJ 07078. Or email jenhiggins@home.com. Items should be received by the third Friday of each month.
Dear Plainfield Garden Club Members,

As the gardening catalogs start arriving in my mailbox, I once again am lulled by their merry optimism…can I really try (once again) waves of delphinium and lupines? (No.) And how do their purple coneflowers stand so tall and upright? All the pictures of plants looking marvelous together are nowadays viewed with some skepticism on my part. I was once tempted into purchasing Helen Elizabeth poppies and, to complement them, a purple dome aster…they were actually together in the “picture”! Knowing nothing, (this was YEARS ago!) I ordered them and planted them as suggested. Of course, the poppies completely outgrew the aster, and it soon faded from sight, and of course, they are in completely different growing seasons! The good news – the poppies are lovelier each year. So let the catalogs come…nothing is better than looking at such beautiful things, I’m hoping for a wonderful spring!

Fondly, Tucker

Horticulture

Here are some timely tips for getting the garden ready in March and April:

March
- Trim winter damage from Rhododendrons
- Begins to remove mulch from perennials
- Prune climbing hydrangeas and summer flowering shrubs (e.g. Buddleia)
- Feed trees and shrubs
- Cut Forsythia for forcing indoors
- Apply dormant oil sprays late in month

April
- Plant trees and shrubs
- Check stored bulbs and tubers for decay
- Fertilize established perennials
- Prune and fertilize old rose bushes
- Plant new rose bushes
- Plant pansies
- Divide crowded mums, hostas and phlox
- Prepare garden beds for planting
- At end of month start hardening off seedlings started indoors

Mary and Sally

Shakespeare Garden

Eight of us met on Feb. 28th to plan for the coming season. We are sending for catalogs from companies used as sources for the Cloisters Garden. We may be adding or deleting...
plants in order to make our garden as authentic as possible. See you in the garden April 18th!
Mary and Sally

Shakespeare In Bloom
We are looking forward to a beautiful Day in the Garden on June 2nd, from 10AM-4PM with blue skies, a gentle breeze, fluffy clouds with moderate temperatures for a celebration of Spring in the Garden! If you have any thoughts, ideas or suggestions for the event please call Jeanne Turner – (908) 755-2730.

Flower Arranging
Next up is the Engelwood Show, “Fashion In Flowers”, May 4-5th (entry deadline April 1st.) We hope to have several members illustrate what we’ve learned from Laurie Appel and our own show of the same theme. Good luck to all entrants!
Beth Harbaugh and Carroll Keating

Conservation
We are please to include in this month’s report that the PGC has voted on and approved an award in the amount of $250.00 to be given to a deserving student at the Plainfield High School. This money will be awarded annually to a student in the science department of PHS who is working on a project in the area of botany and /or conservation.
In the area of ecology, we have reviewed a letter from Ricky Lang and his request for financial assistance to replace plant material that had died in a draught in the summer of 1998 at the Trailside Reservation. His attention to detail of the steps necessary to ensure the survival of these trees or shrubs convinced our members that this is a worthy cause. We will be assisting Ricky in his efforts.
On February 26-28, Diane was off to Washington, DC for the annual conservation convention – the highlight of the Conservation Committee’s calendar year! Look for a recap of the event in the next newsletter!
Respectfully submitted,
Diane Carpenter and Penny Taylor

Program
At our February meeting Laurie Appel gave pointers to our members while she demonstrated two types of floral arrangements. Because our meeting was lengthy, she did not have time to finish the arrangements, but she was very helpful critiquing the arrangements of our members. I want to keep several colored posters in my basement to use as a background for arrangements. Laurie showed what a difference a pale blue background makes! Forget pasty white or grey. A background color adds a whole new perspective.
- Nina Weil

Here’s what’s next:
April 18th, 9:00 am – lunch
Shakespeare Garden
Opening Spring Clean-Up, Meeting to follow at the home of Mrs. William Weil
Please bring a sandwich

May 16th, 9:45 am – coffee
Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church
Flower Arranging Demonstration
Cindy Affleck – “Tips for Exhibiting In Flower Shows”
Horticulture Show (see handbook for schedule)

Civic Projects
We recently had a very successful planting day at the Plainfield High School atrium on March 14th. Betty Hackman, Diana Madsen and Nina worked with Mrs. Tony Watt and four students planting five flats of pansies under dogwood trees. We were fortunate it had rained heavily the day before so our work was easier. In just over an hour we dug the beds and planted the pansies. There were many interested students and teachers who stopped by giving us encouragement and complimenting our work. We took pictures of the areas we worked in and the areas that need landscape design. It was a most enjoyable afternoon thanks to Mrs. Watts and Brittany, Imani, James ah Jamal.
- Nina and Karen

Yearbook
Anyone who would like and addition or correction to her listing in the 2001-2002 Yearbook should kindly let me know. I will begin working on it shortly. Thanks!
- Jane Burner

Do you have something to include in the next newsletter? Send submissions to Jennifer Higgins, 187 Old Short Hills Road, Short Hills, NJ 07078. Or email jenhiggins@home.com.
**The Plainfield Garden Club Newsletter**

**April 2000**

*A Message From The President...*

Spring has finally arrived and naturally I spend countless hours patrolling my garden. It gives me such comfort. I’m looking at all my plants in a more critical way in preparation for our May Horticulture Show!

Our members continue to amaze me with their vitality and willingness to perform many, many volunteer hours to further our causes...we plant at local schools, prepare for our Shakespeare In Bloom, coordinate with other clubs for the Harvest Show, judge at the Daffodil Show, and, of course, enter in any GCA show we can. Let me take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for all you do.

On a more personal note, I am looking forward to attending the Annual Meeting in Orlando next week with Mary. We are taking the pre-tour to Palm Beach which I know will be fantastic...think of us lunching at the Everglades Club and touring some incredible private homes. We will make a full report at the May meeting. Now read on for detailed reports on all our activities...

Fondly, Tucker

* * *

**Flower Arranging**

Unfortunately, it seems the urge to dig in the dirt prevented many of our most talented flower arrangers from creating an entry for the Daffodil Show. Yet in spite of her near insurmountable desire to seed, sow, plant and prune our “Lone Arranger” Carroll Keating laid aside her bag of garden tools and lassoed a stunning bunch of daffodils into a glorious creation for the recent show at the Freylinghuysen. Thank you, Carroll!!!

* * *

**Horticulture**

At the garden on Wednesday, we were talking about the Latin name “minutes” that Anne Marie Seybold used to hold at meetings. Each meeting she would present a few names for us to learn. We thought we might like to revive this. Is there anyone out here who would like to be the presenter?

In fact, the conversation went further and we were wondering if there might be anything that you would like to learn from the Hort. committee. Are there any techniques or subjects that you are curious about? Are there any projects you would like to pursue? I have two large fish bowls and am thinking of making two terrariums. Is there any interest in this project? Any feedback, questions, etc. can be sent to me at sbooth1954@aol.com.

The next meeting is our Horticulture Show. We are hoping that EVERYONE will participate. For the branches and specimens, please provide your own containers (we have a few Perrier bottles if you want to borrow them) and wedging material. If you
would like an entry card to fill out before the show, please call Mary or Sally. It is better to fill them out early as it is always hectic the morning of the show. Please know what you have and the botanical name for your entry. If you have ANY questions, please do not hesitate to call either of us. We have quite a few books for identification. We had 9 entries for the Horticulture portion of the Daffodil Show. Sally, Mary and Diana Madsen entered. Mary won two blues, one red and a third! WOW!!! Sally won a blue. As we all know, spring was a little late this year so there weren’t as many entries as in past years.

Mary and Sally

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Conservation

The three day GCA conservation convention in Washington, D.C. held at the end of February, was the opportunity for conservation committee chairs throughout the United states to exchange ideas. Our Monday afternoon meeting was a “musical tables” event where we moved from table to table learning about conservation concerns across the country. Tuesday we were bussed (at 7:20am!) to the Rayburn building where we listened throughout the day to a series of government and private sector speakers, covering such topics as SUV emissions, Biogenetics, clean air, open space. These first two days prepared us for the final day when we went with our fellow zone chairs to meet as a group with our senate representative. We Zone IV members conveyed our concerns regarding our opposition to the proposed Meadowlands shopping mall, our desire to see SUV’s be categorized as cars rather than trucks in order to tighten their fuel emission standards, our desire for full funding for C.A.R.A. (President Bush has pledged this), and our opposition to oil drilling at ANWR (Arctic National Wildlife Refuge). What a whirlwind three days! P.S. Betsy Nottingham hosted a wonderful dinner in her new home for the Zone IV reps and says “Hello” to all her NJ friends.

On the home front, the Plainfield High School science department head, Ms. Toni Watt, thanks the PGC for its Conservation/Botanical Research Grant of $250.00. This money is earmarked for research that is being done by Miss Tiffany Stevens, a sophomore at PHS, in the area of water retention in farm soil. Miss Stevens had offered to speak to the club about this research at a future PGC meeting.

- Diane Carpenter and Penny Taylor

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Program

The recent Zone IV Program Committee Meeting opened with this fun and useful list of “Helpful Hints – Gardener to Gardener”:

1) Judy McKee, GC Englewood: Digging a new bed? Outline it first with flour.
2) Kathy Powell, GC Trenton: Add 1 to 2 tablespoons of Listerine to one gallon of water to preserve cut flowers. Mint flavor is fine, although water will be green
3) Pam Switlik, GC Trenton: Learn from the mistakes of others. You can’t possibly live long enough to make them all yourself.
4) Barbara Gallup, GC Princeton: To secure stem in arrangement without frog or oasis, brace stem against side of container, cutting stem to conform to side of vase. To
extend life of amaryllis in arrangement, put Tampax in hollow stem to absorb and retain water.

5) Sharon Knill, GC Princeton: For continual color and interest in sunny garden, plant a mix of flowers and vegetables.

6) Ellen Morris, Short Hills GC: To make rooting hormone agent, soak a bunch of willow twigs in water for 24 hours. The “willow water” contains a natural rooting hormone into which cuttings can be introduced to start root growth. Weeping Willow is best.

7) Martha Tucker, Summit GC: To keep a Gerbera daisy pert & straight in an arrangement, insert a straw or pipe cleaner in its stem. Water will still feed the flower that will lack its characteristic droop.

8) Unni Cooper, Short Hills GC: To temporarily darken a room for slides, tape brown paper to spring rods and install in windows.

9) Susie Swayne, GC Morristown: To speed up the bloom of a potted amaryllis, water with warm to hot water.

10) Margo Packouz, GC Morristown: Chase away winter blues by treating yourself to pretty cut flowers!

11) Carla Blanco, GC Madison: to extend the stem of a cut flower, e.g. a rose, use a straw. If necessary, fill the straw with water, plugging the bottom with clay or playdough, insert stem and place in arrangement.

- Nina and Karen

Here’s what’s next:

Tuesday, May 15\textsuperscript{th} – Board Meeting, Tucker Trimble’s house
12:30 PM
NOTE CHANGE FROM MONDAY!

Wednesday, May 16\textsuperscript{th} – 9:45 AM, coffee
Crescent Ave. Presbyterian Church
In-House Horticulture Show
Flower Arranging Demo

Saturday, June 2\textsuperscript{nd} – 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Shakespeare in Bloom
Shakespeare Garden – Cedar Brook Park, Plainfield
Open to the Public

Wednesday, June 6\textsuperscript{th} – 9:45 AM– End of Year Picnic
Shakespeare Garden
Lunch Provided
Please bring at least two plants to sell for fundraising
Dear Plainfield Garden Club Members,

As you know, our garden club is sharing the responsibility of the Plant Sale with the Morristown Garden Club next September. Mary and I received all the information from the past several years of the Plant Sale from the Garden Club of the Oranges and helpful hints and advice from the past chairwomen. We organized a meeting at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum with Alice Cutler from Morristown. Unfortunately, only Alice could come but she will pass on the information from the meeting and give us the names of those members from the club who will be helping us.

We were very pleased that Nancy Strong from the Frelinghuysen could join us and give us an idea of what is involved. She is very knowledgeable and will be able to help our members with any questions we might have.

The jobs that have been filled or need to be filled are as follows:
1. Buying plants – PGC: Susan Fraser, Chair. Sally Booth, Elva Busch, Mary Kent
2. Scheduling – PGC: Barbara Peek, Chair. Joan Vivian
3. Treasurer – MGC
4. Publicity – Shirley Cameron (Vice Chairman, NJ Committee of GCA)
5. Secretary

Mary and I will bring up the recommendation made to have the time of the sale and the name of the speaker listed in next year's pamphlet at the NJ Committee meeting April 9th. We will also find out how much money is available to purchase the plants. Mary and I want to thank our members who came to the meeting: Barbara Peek, Elva Busch, Joan Vivian, Susan Fraser, Sally Booth, Tucker Trimble and Betty Hackman. We especially thank Barbara and Susan for being chairwomen. We have so much to be thankful for in our club with the support and strength of our membership.

We will forward the names and the phone numbers of the Morristown members who will be helping with the Plant Sale when we receive them.

Mary and Nina
Co-Chairs
P.S. We welcome any volunteer help!

And Finally...

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Mrs. Richard C. Vivian (known to one and all as Diddles) died March 4th in Oxford, MD, where her children, Richard and Dana, live. Services were held on a lovely spring-like day in the charming little stone church in Oxford. - JV
The Plainfield Garden Club Newsletter
May 2001

A Message From The President

Dear Plainfield Garden Club Members,

May 17th was a bit of heaven! The meeting, the wonderful speaker, Cindy Affleck, the beautiful horticulture show . . . it was all to my mind what our Club is all about. Everywhere I turned I heard our members saying the same thing. I received a darling note from our Zone Chairman, Sally Solmsen, thanking us for inviting her. She referred to our Club as “small but mighty”, a sentiment I share. It is only after being President that I realize how true those words are. There are many unsung heroines among us. I know that as I leave the Presidency I will also enjoy the view from the other side, and I look forward to trying out different positions. I see very bright things in the future for our Club, and am proud to be a member in this very vibrant organization.

Fondly, Tucker

Horticulture

Congratulations Plainfield Garden Club! You put on a fabulous Horticulture show on Wednesday! We were thrilled with the numbers of entries. We think the judges were impressed with the number, variety and quality of plant material. Many thanks to everyone who entered, helped set up, passed entries, etc. etc. We are so proud to have put on such a good show!!! Thanks also to our hostesses for a delicious coffee service and all the treats. Nothing like a little sweet to calm the nerves once all entries are in place!

Congratulations as well to Phyllis Alexander and Betty Hackman for winning a second for your trough garden in the Engelwood show. There were a dozen entries so your second place was really an honor!

We will be in the garden every Wednesday and most Thursdays. Please join us. It will nourish your soul and clear your mind! See you there!

Sally and Mary
**Flower Arranging**

Not much to report at this time, just a reminder to start thinking about the Harvest Show in September. It comes up very quickly at summer’s end, and we’d like to have as many entries as possible. This is one of the most enjoyable shows to enter – it’s relatively low-key and serves as a great kick-off to the new garden club year. Please call us if you are interested.

Carroll and Beth

**Program**

Could it be? Our last meeting is upon us? Please join us as we pass the Presidential Trowel from Tucker to Mary –

Wednesday, June 6th – 9:45 a.m., in the Shakespeare Garden

Annual Meeting
Picnic lunch provided
Please bring two plants to be sold for fundraising

**A Fond Memory of a Heck of a Lady**

Mrs. Willoughby Frost

Word has come that Mrs. Willoughby Frost has passed to her reward – and a “great reward” it should be!

Virginia, as you may be aware, is one of the Plainfield Garden Club’s honorary members, an honor well deserved. We were all so proud of her exceptional talents – we were often in awe of what she could accomplish in so many fields.

One of her projects which I remember was with others running the Junior League Garden Club – it was a great way to inform the uniformed about gardening, and mostly about flower arranging, so there would be people somewhat trained to join the Plainfield Garden Club.

We had regular classes and projects to work out, beginning with three flowers (unbought – one had to grow or steal the flowers) and greens. Then Virginia or her sister, Dorothy de Hart, or Marion Loizeaux would criticize our work and highlight our errors. That was the fun part! She could be funny – “Well, clearly someone spent money on this one,” or “You didn’t need to cut down the whole tree for a few greens. Go out, look up, and find a branch that is growing the direction or way you want it – then cut that branch!”

Virginia was a respected GCA judge. She worked hard in the Shakespeare Garden – trimmed the topiaries, etc. She was also a landscapist in planning a project – or pointing out how to bring back to size a too large or vigorous Victorian shrub, removing a tree, or suggesting an improvement in design.

The Plainfield Garden Club decided to put in a “vest-pocket park” (which were the current rage at the time), and we found a narrow plot on Park Avenue which would suit the purpose. Virginia drew the plans and we planted it accordingly – letting her beat
us into visiting the park each day for watering and trash pick-up. It was duly admired and very successful.

Another first for Plainfield city streets: Virginia and I guessed Jean Stewart went to a GCA meeting and came home with the idea to plant trees in the sidewalks along the curbs! After much study as to variety and spacing, the club bought a dozen Moraine Locusts with tiny blow-away leaves to give filtered shade. They turned out to be a real demonstration, as the city went ahead the next season and bought seventy-five more! Though 35-40 years old now, they still line Front Street, and Park Avenue from Front to the railroad bridge.

When the annual Flower Show was announced in New York City, Virginia and the girls all put their heads together to compete. Several times there were big landscape classes – a back door landscaped with proper planting – Virginia always in the thick of it, bringing home the blues.

Or if she competed on her own, she got her material, books and containers, and locked herself in an upstairs room, sometimes for days, until all was set. Soak the wisteria vine in the bathtub, curve it this way or (change) that – the bend was important. The family was “on its own” at these times – but this meant so much to Virginia, there were often tears of frustration. She cared, she wanted it right, and the “blues” flowed in.

Mrs. Frost knew her duty, too: drove the Hartridge carpool, worked endlessly at the church (behind the scenes), had punch parties before dancing school, and all that. A wonderful entertainer, with everything “just so”. She had her feisty side too – I have to mention that to give a well-rounded picture – but she could speak up at times for us all to hear.

- Barbara Sanford