



Winter 2023

NEWSLETTER

Atlantic Master Gardeners Association

Helping Others Help Themselves



THIS ISSUE

I've tried my hand at many things, but this is my first newsletter. The software is a struggle. Your patience and good nature is so appreciated, as are comments.

We all know people who toil away quietly in the background making all of our lives better. Well, Sue Stuart was one of those. She was never the boistrous one at meetings - there was me, Lynn Brooks and Sandra Matchett for that.

But she always got things done, and once she had her mind made up to do something, there was no stopping her! She attempted to single-handedly get a nut industry started in the region to allow her son and his family to move closer to home. It was the only time I've ever seen her frustrated. She will be missed by many - and not just because we're trying to pick up the pieces. She was the real thing.
Human. Kind. Both.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Another gardening season has come to an end and we have been busy putting our gardens to bed. I will never know how a season can go by so quickly.

As many of you know our editor Sue Stuart passed away in the spring. There are not enough words to express our appreciation for Sue's dedication to our organization and her work as our newsletter editor. A sincere thank you to her. Carol Goodwin has volunteered to be our new editor and thank you so much Carol for being willing to add this to your already busy schedule.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to new members of our Executive. Bob Esliger - Member at Large for New Brunswick, Robert Fraser - Member at Large for Prince Edward Island and Rose Kelly - Member at Large for Newfoundland and Penny Irving is taking over hosting our monthly Zoom sessions. Thank you so much for joining our Executive.

One further announcement is the change to our Facebook Account. Our old account has been discontinued (you can still view it) and a new business account created which will be linked to our Instagram account and our Website. Thank you so much Richelle Gregg for doing this.

Christmas is fast approaching, our gardens have been put to bed and now many of you are using the fruits of your labour to make Christmas decorations such as planters, swags, center pieces and whatever else your imagination creates. The Zoom session on December 4th provided us with an opportunity to see how creative our members are. It was a delightful evening.

New seed catalogues have started to arrive and will provide hours of enjoyment during our winter months. Winter is a time to let our imaginations grow as we ponder over our catalogues looking for something new as well as our old favourites. These catalogues almost compete with the old Sears Wish Book that many of us anxiously waited for the arrival of in the fall.

I would like to wish you all a great Festive Season and look forward to seeing you in the new year. Our next Zoom session will be on January 8/24. Until then, take care and Happy Holidays.

Sandra Matchett



We have just had news on the passing of Emily Miller. Long-time members will recall her perpetual smile, bottomless cups of hot drinks and cookies. She had a wonderful urban garden, and her husband Dawson created garden features that were the envy of us all. Emily was an AMGA founding member, and served in several roles before declining memory prompted her to resign from the executive. If you bumped into her and Dawson on an outing, she would ask ‘did I know you?’ and your reassurance always resulted in a big smile and a hug. I really hope they didn’t break the mold when she was born!

If you are wondering how you can contribute to the Association in ways that celebrate lost members, please send ideas and suggestions for MG workshops you would like to see offered by the Association and consider hosting one. It can be ANYTHING, and we’d love to hear from you.

Need education hours? We always need newsletter items! Brag about your favourite plant or tell us about your latest horticulture adventure of any kind. Your fellow MGs really like to know what you’re up to! If you’ve completed your MG training or will do so at summer school, and are wondering if graduation is something you should attend, the answer is yes! We want to celebrate with you.



The Bell Tower and its Garden

Marilyn Elliott & MG Lynn Brooks

To understand this story I want to take you back to the morning of 6 December 1917 and the collision between two ships in the narrows of Halifax Harbour. It stopped citizens in the street, or brought them to the windows of their home to watch as a ship on fire (the Mont-Blanc) drift lazily towards the shore. No one was aware that what that ship contained would result in the largest man-made explosion the world had even seen until the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima Japan 1945. 1,782 people died and 9,000 others were injured. For me that is the extent of the story that I knew growing up in Halifax. But for Marilyn it was only the beginning:

“Fort Needham Memorial Park is situated on a drumlin* situated in what was once called the Richmond district, it was originally a rose garden with a playground, a ball field and surrounded by trees. The park was given to the city in the 1940s to be a memorial for all eternity to the explosion and to be maintained as such. Time and neglect was not kind. In the 1980’s survivors, their families and concerned citizens began raising funds to erect a monument on the hill in honour of the victims and survivors. In 1985 a permanent memorial was finally built (the bell tower), and from that day since a commemorative service has been held every December 6th to the ringing of the bells”.

She continues: “The new Halifax municipality became involved in the service starting in the 1990s. As the 100th anniversary drew near, the city realized the park was an eyesore, and with help from all levels of government undertook to address drainage and erosion issues, construct a plaza around the tower and planted gardens at the base of the monument,.

New, pathways were installed and entrances were upgraded, commemorative features and interpretive elements were integrated into the Richmond staircase leading from Union Street and along a paved pathway. Gardens were planted but everything died except some climbers.

(I can testify that the euonymus fortunei, and Hedera helix were both thriving.) The monument garden became a weedy mess with dead shrubs. After investing tens of thousands of dollars to construct and plant this site, HRM abandoned it after the 100th anniversary service. For the next three years I wrote letters including photos of the neglected state of the garden, but they showed no interest. 2018, 2019 and 2020 came and went and the gardens got worse, becoming more and more overgrown. In 2021 I met Lynn Brooks through another Master Gardener friend of mine and Lynn agreed to help me in my quest to have this garden properly maintained in July 2021.”

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Meeting Marilyn for the first time, involved climbing the Richmond staircase and since I had to often stop to catch my breath I got the chance to look around. Etched into the rusted iron balustrade are the names of the Richmond schools, churches and some businesses. Looking up at the looming mass of the bell tower, its design concept was to depict destruction and rising from the ashes. I got to appreciate that whoever designed the layout of the monument for the 100th anniversary had really got it right.

We Master Gardeners all have varied interests, public plantings happens to be mine. And in Halifax volunteer help in gardens is not encouraged, in fact you can be fined just for weeding a garden managed by the city. For Marilyn this site is extremely personal and the neglect hurtful. Her father as a baby had been blinded in the explosive. For me it was outrage. I am retired military, for 28 years on November 11th, I had stood at monuments to fallen soldiers in cities and villages across Canada, none of which showed the kind of neglect I saw that day... These victims were not soldiers, but war had killed them just the same.



Marilyn, bless her, would be the first to admit she is not a gardener but very much an extraordinary weeder, and had spent many an hour clearing the memorial often under the eye of city staff who just looked the other way. On that first meeting she couldn't hide her disappointment that a volunteer group of master gardeners couldn't roll up our sleeves and help to make it right. But I did feel excited by the potential of the site. It just cried out for the modern touch of naturalized plantings, not something Halifax city gardens are known for. The rusted elements, the mass of the concrete walls needed more than just annuals planted in the usual city style. As a result of our meeting, Marilyn contacted the CBC, and Colleen Jones did a live story with Marilyn and I. The day after the broadcast work crews were on the site, now we had the city's attention, but it took a new parks supervisor and to this year to really see some change.

Why am I sharing this story is because we who are active as Master Gardeners often are at a loss to find ways to put what we have learned and know into helping our communities. Many do work in community gardens helping people to grow food for their families. But during the pandemic lockdown the only safe place to be was out of doors. And public green spaces often the only source of relaxation and exercise. It was obvious that a mowed spaces with a solitary tree was simply not enough. People wanted to immerse themselves in a space alive with the sound of bees and birds and to be able to stop and sit on a bench and rest their eyes on flowering plants. As gardeners we have that luxury, most people do not. And we don't always consider the importance of spiritual well-being as being a goal that can be achieved with a garden.

Marilyn took these pictures just a month ago. These changes would never have happened without her persistence. And I am very proud to be able to say I helped. I hope this will be an inspiration that change can happen. But this is only one year, gardens are never a one year project. Dealing with city, town, or village bureaucrats, can try the patience of a saint. That is why as master gardeners we have to reach out to like-minded people or be willing to help if they reach out to you...

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. ...

Margaret Mead



The New Brunswicker Apple

Lois Derrah Master Gardener Student, Dalhousie University

Growing up on a farm with an orchard containing several heirloom varieties gave me an appreciation of apples and an interest in their histories. The heritage apple variety discussed here is the New Brunswicker, developed by Francis Peabody Sharp. To fully appreciate the history behind the New Brunswicker one has to know the man behind the apple. The story of this heritage apple, with a history almost 200 years old (Mr. Sharp was born 200 years ago in 1823) has many twists and turns, all of which add to the story. Francis Peabody Sharp is a relatively unknown name today, yet in 1903, Tappan Adney (husband of Francis Sharp's daughter Minnie Bell Sharp) wrote of him in his obituary: "His services to the world were recognized as so considerable that a movement was set a foot to bestow upon him the honour of knighthood, which he characteristically and vigorously discouraged. The Hon. Stephen B. Appleby was one of the gentlemen on the committee that approached Mr. Sharp with this honour". Tappan Adney writes, "The proposal, it is hardly necessary to state to any who know Mr. Sharp, was not received with that warmth with which it might, so the matter was dropped." It is important to begin with a chronological history of the New Brunswicker apple. This includes dates both before and after the discovery of the New Brunswicker .

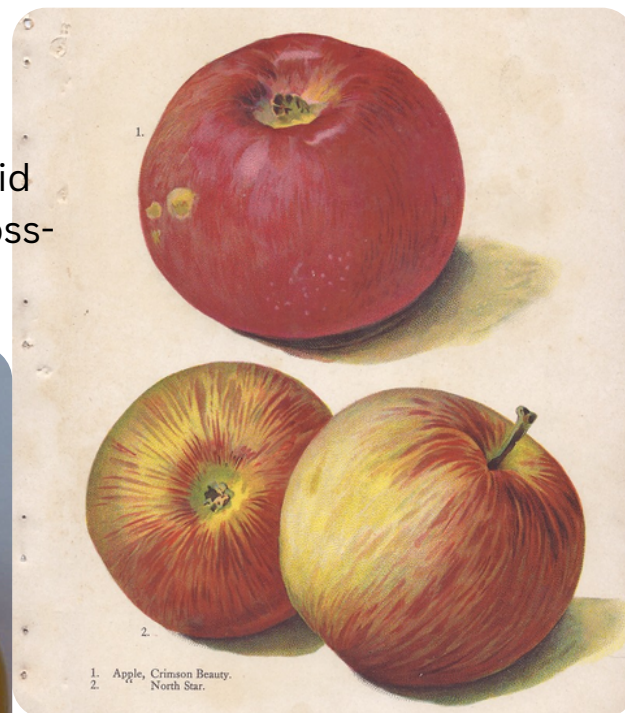
1823, September 3 - Birthdate of Francis Peabody Sharp.

1844 - At the age of 21, Francis Sharp purchased his father's farm in Northampton, NB with 30 acres of native apple trees and five acres of plum trees. Looking for hardy varieties that could withstand our cold winters, Mr. Sharp grafted the trees with good varieties and started his first nursery.



Frances Peabody Sharp

Crimson Beauty, Mr.
Peabody's "first true hybrid
apple from a controlled cross-
breeding experiment"



New Brunswicker apple

At the age of 23, Mr. Sharp went into serious nursery business at Upper Woodstock, NB. He started a diary of his experiments that can be seen in the NB Museum. In 1849 Francis Sharp ordered Russian apple seeds from R.B. Dunning, a wholesale company selling seeds suited to cold climates located in Bangor, Maine. He planted 1000 seeds. “established the ‘Woodstock Nurseries’ carrying out extensive experiments which resulted in the creation of new and valuable fruits as well as the discovery of scientific principles previously unknown.” (From Tappan Adney’s obituary for F.P. Sharp) . In 1854 one of those 1000 Russian seedlings developed to produce 10 or 12 large handsome apples, noticed by nursery worker Darias A. Shaw, who immediately showed them to Mr. Sharp. This one tree bore fruit in 5 years from seed instead of the usual 8-10 years. Thus the New Brunswicker was born. Although he felt the New Brunswicker was the best adapted to the New Brunswick climate, he was not content with the apple’s two flaws. The New Brunswicker lacked the flavour of a dessert apple and it did not store well. Francis Sharp hybridized the New Brunswicker with the Fameuse, an apple from Quebec’s St. Lawrence region that was brought over by early French settlers. The most successful of the discoveries he made from hybridizing was the Crimson Beauty, originally called Early Scarlet, developed in 1866. It was the earliest bearing apple of its time and a solid red colour. It was one of his most successful commercial varieties, the earliest ripening, solid red apple of that time.

A disastrous fire in 1881 destroyed the Sharp home and most of the nursery buildings. Included in the loss was a manuscript that Mr. Sharp was preparing for a book on horticulture. Ten years after the fire F.P. Sharp Nurseries introduced the Dudley Winter (called North Star in the US), an open pollinated seedling. One of the best cooking apples, with a very unique flavour, the Dudley is regaining its popularity in New Brunswick. On December 12, 1903, Francis Peabody Sharp died from pneumonia at age 81.

THE CONTROVERSY

The New Brunswicker apple was a success, taking first prize for the best barrel of any variety, in competition with apples from all of the Eastern States. With the success of the apple some began claiming the New Brunswicker was a Duchess of Oldenburg. In an interview with Daryl Hunter, horticulturalist and historian who has extensively researched Francis Peabody Sharp, he stated "In 1882 Francis Sharp conducted tests between the New Brunswicker and Duchess which were growing side by side, and he pointed out the differences in their characteristics that made the New Brunswicker a better choice. The Duchess was a smaller, more green, and more tart fruit and the quality wasn't as good. The Duchess he said "a little resembles the New Brunswicker, especially when the New Brunswicker is still green and unfit to eat." It was sometimes called the sour New Brunswicker." There have been documented cases of where the New Brunswicker was sold as a Duchess and the Duchess sold as a New Brunswicker in order to satisfy demand. Again quoting Mr. Hunter, "The Nova Scotia packer who purchased the remnants of Sharp's New Brunswicker orchards marketed them as Duchess. In 1911 the new and first fruit specialist of the Prov of NB was hired, A. G. Turney. He was a young man from Ontario. Turney had no source for a large supply of the New Brunswicker apples, but he was told they were the same as Duchess of Oldenburg. He ordered 3 train car loads of grafted Duchess trees from Ontario, and distributed them to growers here in New Brunswick, but labelled them as New Brunswickers." Mr. Hunter shared this information from a long list of references including: letters from Tappan Adney to the Department of Agriculture in Ottawa and to the editors of the Carleton Sentinel. A letter from Lloyd Stark of Stark Brothers Nursery (largest nursery in the world at the time) who believed his company may have been selling New Brunswickers as Duchess and articles and interviews by Tappan Adney are located in the NB Museum.

THE MAN

The following information was obtained from many places but everything in quotation here is taken from the website Find A Grave, and is from Fredericton's Daily Gleaner, dated April 14, 1939. Francis Peabody Sharpe was born on September 3, 1923 in Northampton Parish, NB. He became a self taught orchardist at an early age. "Soon after becoming of age in 1844, Sharp purchased his father's farm at Northampton with its existing orchards and again later opened a nursery at Upper Woodstock, ..." "He grew the first barrel of native New Brunswick apples ever sold in a commercial market." "He was many years ahead of his time, which may account in part for the modest attention paid him by the public life and scientific world of his day."

Mr. Sharp's cultural practices were unheard of. Although he communicated with them, he was quite critical of the Federal Government and the Iowa Agricultural College's methods of apple production. He found he could obtain the best return per acre using careful cultivation, heavy manuring, and close planting (trees planted 2.4 meters / 8 feet apart). Mr. Sharp carefully regulated the balance between roots and top growth of his trees. "Sharp later began the time-consuming practice of systematically hybridizing apples to produce new varieties." He and Peter Gideon of the US were the first in North America to scientifically hybridize apples. Mr. Sharp prevented self-fertilizing and bee pollinating by plucking out stamens before apple blossoms opened. He then covered the blossoms with bags to keep the pollinators away. When the blossoms opened he pollinated those on the mother tree with fresh blossoms from the father tree. Almost all apple trees must be cross-pollinated by a different variety to bear fruit.

The Fameuse is partially self-fertile and able to pollinate itself although another pollinator nearby would provide a better crop. With his New Brunswicker usually as one of the parent varieties, Sharp made some 2,000 crossbreedings, from which originated the Crimson Beauty. In his 'big' orchard, of 70 acres, 40 acres were Crimson Beauty. By 1890 his nurseries and orchards were the largest in all of Canada. His nurseries had 900,000 apple trees and he shipped 18,000 barrels of apples a year to the US.

Francis Sharp excelled at many things. He designed a cider press that would press 30 barrels of apples at a time. The press was worked day and night making cider that was later turned into vinegar. He built windmills to grind bone into bonemeal and designed maple sap evaporators. He also grew plums and pears, vegetables and flowers and other trees as well. The success of his orchards meant the need for barrel making, canning and packing industries. "It is recorded that Sharp put nursery plum trees three feet high into heavy bearing and accomplished the feat of producing an apple from seed 16 months after planting. He turned leaf buds into fruit buds and also reversed the process by cross-fertilizing. These discoveries affected orchard practice and production in many parts of the world. In England, for instance, where fruit trees tended to make excessive wood growth, full bearing at an early age of the tree was brought about." He had offers of position, even a knighthood which he rejected as his only desire was to produce apples that would grow in our northern climate and compete with the best in the US.

CONCLUSION

Francis Peabody Sharp was a man ahead of his time. The New Brunswicker apple can still be seen in many orchards in New Brunswick, a testament to Mr. Sharp's belief that 'good quality' apples could grow and to this day continue to grow in cold climates like northwestern New Brunswick. It is amazing how many of his cultural practices are still widely used over 100 years after his passing. This was not just any apple, but a prize winning apple that could compete with the best that eastern US states grew. I had the privilege to grow up, 'in a veritable fairyland,' under the shade of these spectacular trees, picking and enjoying the results of Mr. Sharp's passion. It is with a great deal of respect and honour that I thank Daryl Hunter of Keswick Ridge, NB for sharing with me his many years of study and research. The accuracy of this paper was important and he made it possible. The following quote is one of Dottie Walters best known quotes and it certainly describes Francis Peabody Sharp's passion and purpose: Anyone can cut an apple open and count the number of seeds. But, who can look at a single seed and count the trees and apples? Dottie Walters

Bonnie Snow Returns!

Garden Redesign Continued

In the fall of 2022 I put some thoughts on paper regarding garden redesign and what I had taken away from the many excellent Master Gardener conference and Zoom presentations over the past few years. I was concerned about my diminishing capacity to bend and weed for long hours as I had been doing for years and that was my prime motivation for design change. Not an exciting prospect. However, our 2023 conference presenters started me thinking. Encouraging a more natural landscape might be the answer to some of my problems. This would be lots more fun than the 'tips for the aging or senior gardener' I had been exploring.....and I would still get to shop for new plants. Yea!

I am now considering a more gradual transformation to something that resembles an ecologically healthy landscape without creating more work for myself. I am not starting from scratch as I do have existing garden beds full of healthy soil, several plants purchased at the Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens spring sale, pollinator plants as well as mature shrubs and one outstanding Japanese maple. It should be a matter of education and adding to what I have. I've started making decisions about plants that for various reasons, need to go. Some will find new homes while others, like the barberries, won't.

Lloyd Mapplebeck spoke eloquently on native plants, their outstanding qualities and relationships with their environment. They are more durable and have the capacity to thrive without depending on resource consuming maintenance regimes. Part of that regime would be me dragging a hose or carrying a watering can. You can cut your workload in the garden substantially by choosing native plants. I hadn't really looked at native plants from that perspective, as a convenience for me.

My native garden will be coastal so I'm not sure where it fits - meadow/prairie, woodland, wet/bog. We have a mix of each with strong, often moisture laden winds. As with any plant you have to understand your zone, soil and light. Also look at the native plants growing around you and take ideas from these. We are so fortunate to have Lloyd's expertise and his nursery available to us. The Nova Scotia Wild Flora Society also provides an excellent list of Maritime nurseries with significant holdings of native species.

Melanie Priesnitz, Conservation Horticulturalist at Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens believes in planting as nature does. She had recommendations for substitutions such as native holly and highbush blueberry instead of the traditional boxwood. She spoke of the American entomologist, Doug Tallamy, a new name to me. I am now enjoying two of his books, *The Living Landscape* and *Nature's Best Hope*.

I have been losing my enthusiasm for the garden because it was simply becoming too much work. A more natural landscape won't solve all my difficulties. I need to mulch more, use ground covers, leave things a little wilder, time manage and look at tools that make weeding easier. But this topic has revived my interest, started me reading and researching and is taking me beyond my usual garden practices.

Looking forward to spring!

Bonnie

Latest Trends in Naturalistic Garden Design: A Tour of the Mid-Atlantic Gardens

By Jim Sharpe

The Philadelphia area, “The Garden Capital of America” has some of the largest and best endowed gardens in North America. In October of this year, I lead a group from the Atlantic Association of Landscape Designers on a tour focusing on naturalistic garden design to some of the major gardens, nurseries and garden designers in the Philadelphia area.

The tour was planned with Anita Jackson who had not been to the area gardens but had contact with North Creek Nursery, an important propagator of native plants. Anita has also written a summary of the trip which is available in the Atlantic Rhodo November newsletter (see <http://atlanticrhodo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Atlantic-Rhodo-Nov-2022.pdf>).

I had visited the large gardens before and also had contact with two area horticulturalists, Joe Henderson from Chanticleer Gardens and his partner Jeff Jabco, head of horticulture at the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College. Jeff and Joe had visited Nova Scotia in September 2019, providing public lectures on Chanticleer to the Rhodo Society and the Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens. Unfortunately hurricane Dorian forced the cancellation of their workshop “Chanticleer: The Art of Garden Design,” that AMGA and Friends of the AC Garden had organized for Dalhousie Agricultural Campus in Truro. They were very helpful providing contact with the garden horticulturalists and designers and as guides to their respective gardens.

Nine members of the Atlantic Association of Landscape Designers participated in the tour along with three others who joined when the tour was promoted to members of AMGA and ARHS. We stayed at the “Inn at Swarthmore” which was very close to the Philadelphia airport and used three rented cars to travel to the gardens.

The first tour was of the naturalization projects at the Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College. The mission for the arboretum is to be a “Garden of Ideas: to sustain the body, enchant the eyes and sooth the spirit” (see <https://www.scottarboretum.org/>) and the campus did not disappoint. Hundred year old trees, class projects and gardens demonstrating ecological relationships all showed the commitment of the College to sustainability. The arboretum has major public outreach with horticultural information on their website and regular seminars and webinars for the community. In fact a few days before we arrived, the arboretum had hosted Martha Stewart for their Perennial Plant Conference organized with Longwood and Chanticleer Gardens. The pictures that follow show some of the trees, student vegetable gardens and their famous amphitheatre in the woods.

Later that day we travelled to Longwood Gardens, one of the largest and best endowed public gardens in the world. After viewing their display gardens, the Conservatory (which is being greatly expanded), and lunch we had a special tour of the Meadow Gardens with Lea Johnson, Associate Director for Landscape Stewardship and Ecology and Kristie Anderson, Horticulturalist in charge of the Meadow and Forest Gardens. They explained the management for the meadow, including a three year burn cycle, regular mowing and weeding out invasive grasses, forbs and shrubs. The grasses and forbs were over six feet high, much more than the two foot seaside meadows that I’m familiar with in the Maritimes. We walked through the meadow to a restored farmhouse which has a wonderful vista over the landscape.



Silver Linden (*Tilia tomentosa*) Trunk must be twelve feet in diameter. Vegetable garden (class project) by Women's Centre and the Swarthmore Outdoor Amphitheatre designed by Thomas Sears





Looking over the Longwood meadow



Meadow garden at Mount Cuba

The next day we went a few miles further south, to the Mt. Cuba Centre in northern Delaware. This DuPont estate is dedicated to promoting native plants and was filled with naturalistic plantings. We had an introduction to its native plant trials garden by research manager Sam Hoadley, where each year they trial native varieties and publish the results for gardeners and the nursery trade (see extensive reports on their website MtCubaCenter.org). The tour included the woods, pond and meadow filled with native plants. After lunch in nearby Kennett Square (close to Longwood) we spent the afternoon at North Creek Nursery, viewing their display garden and seeing their extensive systems for plant propagation. The Atlantic Rhododendron and Horticultural Society plans to import native plants from North Creek Nurseries for its spring members plant sale.

We spent the full third day at Chanticleer Garden, which many felt was the highlight of the trip. As one participant observed: “This garden is life changing; I hadn’t realized that gardening could be an artform!” Joe Henderson gave an extensive tour of both the public gardens and the metal and wood workshops where they produce functional garden art during the winter months. The gardens include a formal entrance display of tropical plants, the estate house with terraces turned into natural meadows, an elevated walkway where you can view plants from above and below, an extensive gravel garden and ruins, a stream garden, pond garden and Asian woodland gardens. Their focus is on sustainability, garden design and interesting plants, with plant lists provided instead of labels. The plant lists are contained in amazing stands, including one that resembles a wasp’s nest. Chanticleer offers extensive workshops and seminars for the community. In fact on our visit Anita met Annie Guilfoyle from the “Garden Masterclass” network (see gardenmasterclass.org), who was leading a three day workshop on naturalistic garden design.



Formal Meadow Garden at Estate Terrace

View from the Elevated Walkway



The gravel garden at Chanticleer



Wasp letter box containing plant list leaflets and pumpkin bench - art at Chanticleer

The final day included visits to two smaller working gardens, Brandywine Cottage created by David Culp and Donald Pell and Associates Landscape Design. David Culp was charming, explaining his garden design principles of “The Layered Garden” and showing us his extensive Galanthus and Hellebore collections. Donald Pell showed us his extensive display garden of grasses and perennials and advised us on cultivation and maintenance practices.

All in all, the garden tour exceeded our expectations. What was especially rewarding was meeting horticulturalists, designers and plants enthusiasts in their gardens. As David Culp observed about our group: “You Atlantic Canadians are so enthusiastic. Most visiting groups ask: ‘How do you maintain all this, how much time do you spend working in your garden?’” We all agreed with his answer: “As much time as we possibly can.”