



ADIRONDACK
CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

www.acnargs.org

October 2005

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October 15 program: Cold-Hardy Roses

Lee Ginenthal, a local master of roses and owner of Der Rosenmeister, will speak on "History Selection and Culture of Cold-Hardy Roses" at our October 15 meeting.

You might remember Lee from his garden, which borders the Wurster Garden area and was bursting at the seams with all of his gardening interests. He and his wife moved out of town three years ago, and now have room to offer cold hardy roses from their home nursery at 190 Seven Mile Drive.

The presentation is free and open to the public. Brown bag lunch starts at noon and the presentation at 1 p.m. **Note the meeting location:** Room B, **Tompkins County Cooperative Extension**, 615 Willow Avenue, Ithaca, N.Y. (This change from our usual location because of the lack of parking on campus due to the Cornell home football game.)

Anne Klingensmith, Speaker Coordinator

Trough workshop October 22

Are you interested in making an attractive, long lasting and functional planting trough of your own design? Come to the Chapter sponsored trough building workshop I'll be leading on Saturday, October 22 starting at 10:30 a.m. at 4-H Acres on Lower Creek Rd. (Not far from the NYSEG building east of Ithaca.)

Please call or email me to register beforehand so we know how much material we'll need. (See below.)

We've secured the covered outdoor space there for this workshop. We we'll be able to make a big mess and a lot of troughs. The chapter will provide hypertufa mix, dye, bases for the troughs and expert direction. You bring gloves, goggles, wheelbarrows, enthusiasm, and a mold or form.

There will be a short trough-building overview, then we'll mix the hypertufa and start building troughs. This will be a very hands-on project. We will have a couple of concrete mixing machines on hand to speed up the mixing. We should wind up around 2:30 or so. So bring something to munch on.

The workshop fee is \$15 for one medium trough or \$25 for two medium troughs or one large. There very likely will be more mix at no extra cost for the intrepid who feel like making more.

To register: Call me 279-3852. (Best time to reach me is between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.) Or you can email me at: robinia@lightlink.com. I'm glad to answer any questions you have beforehand. I have a lot of good ideas about what to use for forms and molds. This promises to be a very fun, fast paced and productive workshop.

Directions: 4-H Acres is located just north of Rt. 13 on Lower Creek Rd. northeast of Ithaca. From Ithaca, turn left onto Lower Creek Rd. at the first intersection after the intersection with Hanshaw Rd. From the east, Lower Creek Rd. is the first right after the intersection of Rt. 13 and Rt. 366. See map at: <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/tompkins/association/maps/4hacres.html>

Tom Myers

Letter from the chair

It sure was a treat to host Harry Jans at our September meeting for not one, but two presentations! That man has added new meaning to the expression "green thumb." Everything he touched seemed to turn lush and floriferous. Of course, the key to his success is preparation – he's unquestionably a master at providing alpines with the right growing conditions.

This meant doing his homework, in many instances by seeing the plants growing in their natural habitat. He used tufa as literal building blocks in his garden and never shied away from new projects. (See “Meeting follow-up: Harry Jans’ amazing yard,” below.) One of the most memorable slides in my mind was of a dump truck emptying its load of tufa at his home. I was very impressed with his stamina for building new gardens and more than a little envious of his stone-free soil.

Our plants-of-the-month featured a number of plants we had just viewed and touted by Harry. I want to thank Billie Jean for her thoughtful selection. Much to my delight, she has repeatedly been consistent in coordinating our plant sales to the speaker’s topic.

From his extensive travels to China, Harry has produced two DVD’s, which I have ordered for the Chapter. The DVDs highlight alpines of China from his travels there. We’ll plan to show them at one or more programs next year. After that we will offer them for loan to our membership.

Our September meeting was held at Cooperative Extension as will our October meeting since Cornell has another home football game, and that makes campus parking next to impossible. The room was packed with near record attendance with forty-four signing our attendance book and maybe a few more. Wow! In the month ahead, we will also hold a trough-building workshop, the details of which are outlined in this issue. You can look forward to trying some new tips and tricks that Ken Hover, “Dr. Concrete,” offered when he spoke in March. It should be a good one, so plan to join us next month.

Good gardening everyone,

Carol Eichler, Chair

Meeting follow-up: Harry Jans’ amazing yard

Most gardeners struggle with the dynamic tension between the wild nature and human-dominated environments. With too much space and too little time, my plantings are way on the wild side. But after watching Harry Jans’ presentation, “My Own Rock Garden” at our September 17 meeting, I know I’d quickly change my ways if my planting space was limited to a city lot. I’d want a garden like his.

Every square inch of the Dutch Rock Garden Society president’s modest-sized yard was crammed full with carefully installed and intensely managed plantings, including an alpine house, peat



Harry Jans with one of his famous hypertufa plantings. Photo courtesy Alan Grainger.

garden, and a water garden with a recirculating stream.

But Jans' hypertufa walls are what really dropped my jaw. With only so much horizontal space to fill, Jans dramatically increases his planting space by creating vertical walls of hypertufa rock festooned with alpines.

One massive wall with hypertufa rocks sandwiched between tall, vertical columns of granite curbstone set on end replaced the privacy hedge separating Jans' yard from his neighbor's. Jans installs watering systems right in the walls as he builds them, then keeps an eye out for wilting of indicator plants (such as certain *Ramondas*) and switches on the water.

Jans admits that his style of gardening isn't cheap. But he believes that it's best to invest in good stone before you invest in plants. He starts many of the plants in his hypertufa walls by simply blowing seed onto the rock and seeing what comes. This fall, as I scatter seedheads of plants I'm trying to encourage into new areas, I'll take heart knowing that Harry and I share at least a few practices, even if our results are wildly different.

Jan's website hasn't yet been translated into English, but it's filled with wonderful pictures: www.jansalpines.com

Craig Cramer, Editor and webmaster

Trip report: North Hill

On June 30 six members of Adirondack Chapter NARGS and friends and family joined the annual garden tour hosted by Wayne Winterowd and Joe Eck, horticulturists and nationally known authors (see, for example, *A Year at North Hill: Four Seasons in a Vermont Garden*), at their home, North Hill.

North Hill is located in the extreme southern portion of Vermont and almost midway across the state. The zone 4 garden, includes an extensive vegetable plot and landscaping that integrates a continuous flow of perennial beds, shrubs, trees, lawns, an arbor walk, wild areas and an eye-popping rock garden and wall garden. It is at once a "sit and contemplate" place and a feast for the senses that leaves one eager to explore around the next bend in the stone pathway.

One comment heard several times during the self-guided tour was, "If it's this nice now, I wonder what the July and August tours are like?" Our group agreed it would be worth going back another year to see.

Several of us went from North Hill the short distance south to the bridge of flowers in Shelburne, Mass., which is a striking and unusual sight. Located in the same town are rare geological pothole rock formations in the river running through the village.

The trip was a comfortable one day drive and definitely worth seeing for the garden enthusiast. Unless arrangements are different next year, the garden is open only three times during the summer, and you must make reservations. Donations are requested to help support the Aids Project of Southern Vermont. For details, see: <http://www.aidsprojectsouthernvermont.org>.

Alice Davis, Trip/tour co-coordinator

Programs at a glance

- **Oct. 15:** Lee Ginenthal, local master of roses and owner of Der Rosenmeister, on cold-hardy roses. Tompkins County Cooperative Extension, Ithaca. 1 p.m., brown bag lunch at noon.
 - **Oct. 22:** Trough-building workshop. 10:30 a.m., 4-H Acres, Ithaca. (Off Rt. 13 near NYSEG.)
 - **Nov. 19:** Annual Meeting & Lunch. Members share tips on overwintering plants in pots. Art Trimble reports on national NARGS conference. Whetzel Room, Plant Science Building, Cornell.
 - Updates and more information: www.acnargs.org
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Other events

- **Cornell Plantations Lecture Series:** Wednesday evenings (except Oct. 12) through Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m., Alice Statler Hall Auditorium, Cornell University. Schedule: www.plantations.cornell.edu/education/lectures.cfm
 - **Jan. 27-29: Master Class in Rock Gardening** sponsored by Manhattan Chapter, North American Rock Gardening Society. More info: www.nargs.org.
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People

Questions? Want to find out how you can help the Chapter? Don't hesitate to contact one of the volunteers who help make everything happen:

- **Chair:** Carol Eichler, cme24@cornell.edu, 607-387-5823
- **Treasurer:** Carolyn Yaeger, cao2@cornell.edu, 607-844-9462
- **Speaker Coordinator:** Anne Klingensmith, aekling@lightlink.com, 607-256-9308
- **Garden Trip/Tours:** Peg Ross and Alice Davis, pogr@aol.com, 607-656-4237 (Peg), 607-656-9931 (Alice)
- **Picnic:** Debi Lampman, bedlam@bluefrognet.net, 315-364-8725
- **Member participation:** George Erdman, gerdman@binghamton.edu, 607-748-3984
- **Plant of the Month:** Billie Jean Isbell, bj1@cornell.edu, 607-539-6484
- **Plant sales:** David Mitchell, dwm23@cornell.edu, 607-342-3660
- **Membership:** John Gilrein, basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu, 315-492-0844
- **Newsletter editor/Webmaster:** Craig Cramer, cdcramer@twcny.rr.com, 607-539-7233
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