



ADIRONDACK  
CHAPTER

*North American Rock Garden Society*

# Green Dragon Tales

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[www.acnargs.org](http://www.acnargs.org)

July/August 2007

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**Picnic & members-only plant sale Aug. 18 at Bill and Jane Plummer's (near Painted Post)**

Plans are set for our annual picnic and members-only plant sale at Bill and Jane Plummer's in Gang's Mills (across the river from the village of Painted Post, N.Y.) Here's the schedule for **August 18**:

10 - 11 Set-up and pricing  
11 - 12 Sale  
12 dish-to-pass lunch  
1 p.m. Tour Bill's garden and clean-up

As in past years, we'll very democratically allow those who arrive first to get "first dibs" at purchases. So it pays to arrive early. For the treasured and special plants, we will have a silent auction table. Note this is our only members-only sale and we should have some real gems. You may join for 2007 at the meeting for \$10 (\$15 for families). It's still a great value since we have half of our program year ahead of us.

Our Chapter has plenty of good cooks, so bring your appetite, a dish-to-pass, and tableware in addition to plants you want to donate for the sale.

Bill says that rather than try to decide what plants people would want from his garden, he will pot some things up for the sale. But members may dig and divide plants directly and make a donation to the Chapter. So bring extra pots and Bill will have compost for potting up. Some plants, of course, would be off limits.

What will you see at the Plummers'? Here's what the Garden Conservancy had to say about Bill's garden previewing his tour earlier this year:

An award winning native plant garden under mature oaks, pines and hickories featuring Trilliums, Bloodroot, Virginia Bluebells, Jack-in-the-Pulpits and many other wildflowers planted in masses. As you enter, the driveway is lined with *Epimedium rubrum*. Numerous paths wander throughout both front and back woods allowing close-up views of the plants. There are scores of ferns, both native and exotic, scattered throughout the woods and along a Pteridophyte Ptrail. Bill has planted numerous understory trees including Dogwoods, Redbuds, Silverbells, a Paper Bark Maple and various striped Maples. The shrub border consists mostly of native plants and provides privacy as well as obscuring the deer fence. A large collection of Rhododendrons, Azaleas and Mountain Laurel provide bloom from April into July. A half dozen stone walls provide sunny sites for rock garden plants and shady sites for shade lovers. A perennial bed in front is filled with Hellebores, spring bulbs and a host of perennials. The flagstone patio is ringed with flowering shrubs and trees and allows a view of the back woods. A flower bed off the flagstone patio in back contains more shade plants. Still another bed is home to a collection of Epimedium and Astilbe providing color both in spring and in summer.

**Directions:**

The Route 15/I-86 Interchange is being rebuilt. Hopefully there will be no detours, new bridge or new ramp opened to confuse you. If you use MapQuest it has us at 2 Fox Lane East between Badger and Weston. If the new bridge over the river is open it will bring you onto Canada Road. If the new ramp (off Rte 15) is open it will bring you directly onto Robert Dann Drive.

10 Fox Lane East, Gang Mills, N.Y.

**From Ithaca:** Rte. 13 to Horseheads and I-86 West. Take Exit 44 to Gang Mills (Do not take Rte 15 to Williamsport). Turn left at the traffic light at the top of the ramp and cross river. Turn left at the light at the bottom of the ramp (Canada Rd.). Turn right at the next light (Robert Dann Drive) and left at the light onto Chatfield Place. (The entrance to Home Depot and Wal-Mart will be to your right). In one mile turn right on Weston and an immediate right onto Fox Lane. We are the third house on the right. Park head-in on the grass by the road.

**From Watkins Glen:** Take Rte. 414 to Corning. Take ramp to I-86 and Rte 15 and follow above directions.

If you take Rte 15S to Williamsport proceed to Exit 3. Turn right at bottom of ramp onto Rte 417, South Hamilton and proceed 0.7 miles. Turn left at traffic light, onto Beartown Road. In 0.6 mile Beartown will curve to left. Go straight and make an immediate right onto Badger. At 2nd intersection turn right at yield sign. Go straight at next intersection. Third house on right.

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**Need Sand?**

Jerry Yaeger has a truck load of sharp sand. If any members would like a bucket or a pickup truck load please contact him at jay7@cornell.edu or call 844-9462 evenings/weekends.

## Mark your calendar: Upcoming programs

**August 18 – Picnic and members-only plant sale.** Bill Plummer, Gangs Mills (near Painted Post), N.Y., will host. See details above.

**September 15 – Ellen Hornig**, proprietor of Seneca Hill Perennials and well known to many chapter members, will talk on woodland plants and other treasures from her garden/nursery. Location to be announced.

**September 29 (tentative) – Hypertufa workshop** with Art Friedel, Watson Greenhouse, Lafayette, N.Y. ([www.watsongreenhouse.com](http://www.watsongreenhouse.com)). Cost will be \$35 and limited to 10 registrants.

**October 21 – Janis Ruksans**, owner of Ruksans Bulbs Nursery in Latvia, a world renowned bulb grower and collector and author of five books on bulbs will speak. **Note this meeting will be on a Sunday** due to Ruksans' tight speaking schedule. 404 Plant Science. Brown bag lunch at noon. Program begins at 1 p.m.

**November 10 – Annual meeting and dish-to-pass.** 404 Plant Science. Brown bag lunch at noon. Location to be announced.

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## Quebec garden tour report

A lucky thirteen: Mary Stauble, Bill Stark, Billie Jean Isbell, David Mitchell, Jerry Weiland, Joy Coletta, Carolyn Yaeger, Pat Curran, Carol Eichler, Colette Menassian, Donna Kraft, Barb Hamlin, and John Gilrein, made the 554 mile journey north to Frank Cabot's garden, Les Quatre Vents, on June 14, 2007. Along the way, some of us stopped at the Montréal Botanical Garden and made a bee line to the alpine garden. I was especially struck by the tall rock formations and the use of weathered pines at the top, effectively simulating an alpine environment.



Onward, passing Quebec City and finally to the tiny town of LaMalbaie, to our hotel, Auberge au Petit Berger, nestled on a hill overlooking the St. Lawrence River. To our delight we discovered dinner and breakfast were included. We had the restaurant all to ourselves as we were one of the very first tourists to visit the area for the season. A friendly chef came out and talked to us about what he could prepare. The dinner was great, but not to be our best on the trip.

The next morning we drove over to Frank Cabot's garden, Les Quatre Vents, a five-minute drive. Billie Jean had the security code to open the gate and we drove in. We eventually obeyed the signs and parked our cars in a field, then walked down a long road lined with tall Lombardy poplars to the main house where Frank was waiting.

Frank's book, *The Greater Perfection*, is the story about the gardens and is a must read before and after visiting. It is an incredible place, made even more so by having been guided by the garden designer himself. Frank carried a note pad and a camera, stopping to write and to photograph moments he liked. It was nice to see the gardener enjoying his work. The tour lasted over two hours and then we had lunch near the terrace just opposite the white garden. With the entire place to ourselves for the day we were free to revisit areas. Later several of us bought Frank's book and he happily wrote a personal note and signed each one.

With the highlight of our trip now behind us, we headed straight for Quebec City and checked into the Hotel Chateau Bellevue, located in the shadow of the famous Chateau Quebec. We all had the evening and following afternoon free to explore the walled city. Then on the road again, heading toward Maria Galletti's well known nursery, Alpine Mont Echo, in Sutton. On the way we stopped at Parc Marie-Victorin in Kingsey Falls about 100 miles southwest of Quebec City.

Parc Marie-Victorin was nothing like Frank's and it took some adjustment of attitude to appreciate. The garden is more public and makes use of whimsical sculptures throughout, some being planted topiaries. Hours later we arrived in Sutton and checked into our bed and breakfasts, Pinorama and Chevalier Mont Echo. Dinner was at Il Duetto, an Italian restaurant housed in a converted barn. Again, we had a wonderful chef who came out and chatted with us. It was the best dinner most of us had during the four-day trip.

The next morning, the final day of our trip, Maria Galletti gave us a tour of her fabulous gardens, ranging from alpine to woodland. She has recently been collecting plants in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, adding even more interesting plants you won't find in gardens or in the trade. In her nursery we devoured plants with our eyes and bought wildly without any regard as to what to do with them later. The plants had to be shipped because we could not get a government plant inspector. After prying ourselves away from the gems we discovered, we drove to Cady's Falls, a nursery in Morrisville, Vermont. Owner Don Avery is an avid plant collector and his display gardens are amazing. There was so much to see including alpine, woodland, perennial beds, and dwarf conifers. We once again devoured plants and this time we were able to take them back with us on our long drive home.

Kudos to Billie Jean Isbell for making the arrangements and keeping us in line throughout the trip.

***David Mitchell, plant sales coordinator***

Photos courtesy Carol Eichler. Top of this article: Group meets Frank Cabot at Les Quatre Vents.



Chinese Moon Bridge at Les Quatres Vents.



Rock garden at Maria Galetti's.



Crevice garden at Montreal Botanical Garden.



Lady Slippers at Cady's Falls Nursery Morrisville, Vermont

## **Letter from the Chair**

It's hard to believe that summer is going by so fast. I hope you're enjoying it to the max. There have been so many wonderful garden tours, none the least of which have been our own two (you will read about the overnighiter to Quebec in this issue) and then there are our own gardens to tend. A gardener's day is never done, but aren't we happiest when we're among the plants?

August 18, we will convene for our annual picnic and member plant sale. This is one of the highlights of the Chapter year and perhaps of the summer. Now is the time to think about some of your treasured plants that you might be able to divide, pot up, and bring to the sale. I have to admit most of my favorite plants have come from my NARGS friends.

There's still plenty of the growing season left and the garden is calling. See you in August.

Cheers,

***Carol Eichler, chair***

P.S.: Please join me in welcoming new members Norma Wood, Jerry Weiland, Linda Yannone, and Carol Bayes.

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## **Hypertufa grow stone workshop September 29**

We have scheduled a hypertufa grow stone workshop for September 29 with Art Friedell III at Watson Greenhouse, LaFayette, N.Y. The cost will be \$35 and limited to 10 registrants.

Watson Greenhouse's ([www.watsongreenhouse.com](http://www.watsongreenhouse.com)) description says: "Create a unique free-form planter with multiple pockets for your favorite alpiners and hardy succulents. Each stone carries the individual signature of its creator." Watson's also claims that they "... offer the largest selection of alpiners and dwarf conifers found anywhere in CNY."

To reserve a spot, contact Carol Eichler: [cme24@cornell.edu](mailto:cme24@cornell.edu), 607-387-5823.

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## **New plants in Wurster Garden**

The study group has been hard at work. To see a list of new plants in Wurster Garden acquired from the 2007 NARGS seed exchange, visit our website ([www.acnargs.org](http://www.acnargs.org)) and click the link at the top of the homepage.

## **June plant sale brings in \$2,220 – A behind-the-scenes look**

A small work crew (3-5 people on average) arrives on Friday sometime after 4 p.m. when we're allowed into the high school. We carry in plants, arrange tables, assemble plants into some semblance of order, price, mount signage, prepare sales check-out, and ... make a list of what we've still got to do. We stay late (7-pm-ish, often we're the last group to leave the high school) but stick with it so that we leave tired and hungry but with a "reasonable sense" of preparedness. Our tables (and the floor area too) are laden with lush plants of all kinds for sun or shade, rock garden or woodland. But we still might not call it a day. Often, as was the case this year when we needed signs made, there are tasks to do at home yet that evening.

Saturday morning bright and early, it all comes together in one last push. You'll see a core group arriving to finish pricing and to prepare to accept more plant donations and helpers. Our treasurer arrives with cash boxes and cash for change. Members show up with more plants and somehow we find space to display new plant donations on already full tables and the floor area. Thankfully our traditional location is right near the back entrance which allows for quick loading and unloading but also gives us room to accept donations and price them before they go on display. These donors and members, as we've come to expect, stay to help with the sale – we need all the hands we can get to answer customers' questions!

It's always a bit of a race with the clock to get everything in order before the official 9 a.m. start time. Potential buyers start arriving about 8 a.m., hovering about and often getting in the way. Once underway, the 4-hour sale goes fast. The last hour we start selling plants at a discount. This year for the first time we tried the "buy one, get one free" tactic and ended up selling out completely. In past years we often had a small but significant number of unsold plants for whom we've had to find an organization interested in taking them.

The sale isn't over until we complete clean-up. This task goes fast as we haul off a fraction of the stuff we arrived with. We sweep the floor and leave our space neat and tidy, then we're outta there.

Maybe it's just my imagination but the sale this year seemed to be the smoothest in my memory. Perhaps it was because most plants were labeled in advance – a big time-saver. It helped too that a number of plant donations were dropped off in advance at David's place hence enabling us to do more advance set-up.

I have been heavily involved in the plant sale for most of the last eight years. Our sales this year were the best in at least 8 years! We brought in \$2,220 (and 75 cents to be exact)! I want to say thank-you to all members who contributed plants! We had both quantity and quality. Our Chapter has built a reputation among knowledgeable gardeners for offering interesting, often unique, plants not offered elsewhere, and our prices are fair. I know that it took time and toil as well as your generosity and thoughtfulness to turn out plants in such numbers. And I thank each and every one who contributed and/or assisted at the sale tables.

Special acknowledgement is due to our plant sale coordinator, David Mitchell. He was there helping out through the whole set-up, sale, and clean-up as well as much of the unsung work that goes into pre-sale preparation.

**Carol Eichler, chair**

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### Coaxing Lewisia to Bloom

In September 2005, I started a new rock garden from scratch, this one in full sun for the first time. And to crown the new plantings, I installed a single *Lewisia cotyledon* 'Fransi' in a stony nook, with a rock overhang to shade it from afternoon sun. A complete neophyte with *Lewisias*, and undeterred by talk of problems cultivating them, I was expecting a lovely outburst of orange flowers next spring. The next March, I was faced with a soggy crown, which later snapped off. One down!



But that same September 2005, I had planted two other *Lewisias* in my original "rockery" in part shade in the backyard. Again, these were in scree-like conditions, with sloping rocky base and #1 round stone supporting the crowns. One of these plants even had a few buds in September and bloomed in October! (See picture above.)

Eagerly awaiting a gorgeous display in early 2006, I was disappointed not to see a single bud on any of the plants! Undeterred, I got another one in May 2006, this time labelled 'George Henley' and planted it in the part shade rockery, on a little scree I have made for primroses and such.

This whole area gets good sunlight early in spring before the nearby maple tree leafs out. This March I finally decided to apply a little Osmocote to all my scree and rock plants. Imagine my surprise, when in early May I noticed a profusion of buds on one and tight little buds on two others! Now at the end of May, there is one lovely crown of pink flowers and two others with several deeper shades and streaks! The secret is of course some good sunny days in spring but an essential feeding of osmocote!

So patience and a little luck paid off with these lovely blooms in May 2007, below, left to right: The same *Lewisia* 'Fransi' pictured above, 'Sunset' and 'George Henley'. You can see more pictures at my website: <http://picasaweb.google.com/narnaree/RockGardenPlants2007>



**Nari Mistry**

## Treasurer position available

The Adirondack Chapter of NARGS will need a replacement Treasurer in 2008. The perks are great:

- You get to take in lots of other people's money and then spend it;
- You get to hear all the news first hand and help shape the future direction of the Chapter;
- You get to work with the current treasurer to learn the job.

The only requirement is basic knowledge of computers and Excel spreadsheet software. No bookkeeping experience is necessary and it takes only a few hours a month of your time. Plus, you'll learn a marketable (perhaps even new) skill!

If you are interested, please call me, at (607-844-9462)

**Carolyn Yaeger, treasurer**

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## Volunteer needed - for lettering on our name tags

We are in the process of printing new name tags, thanks to David Mitchell's assistance. However, we thought it would be great if there was someone among our membership who can do calligraphy or who simply has nice handwriting who would be willing to print our members' names on the name tags. Might this be you? Contact Carol Eichler (607-387-5823 or [cme24@cornell.edu](mailto:cme24@cornell.edu)).

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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. (This is the slate to be voted on at our Feb. meeting):

- **Chair/Membership:** Carol Eichler, [cme24@cornell.edu](mailto:cme24@cornell.edu), 607-387-5823
  - **Vice Chair/Program:** Robin Bell, [rgb2@cornell.edu](mailto:rgb2@cornell.edu), 607-272-2074
  - **Treasurer/Secretary:** Carolyn Yaeger, [cao2@cornell.edu](mailto:cao2@cornell.edu), 607-844-9462
  - **Garden trips/tours:** Billie Jean Isbell, [bjj1@cornell.edu](mailto:bjj1@cornell.edu), 607-539-6484
  - **Plant sales:** David Mitchell, [dwm23@cornell.edu](mailto:dwm23@cornell.edu), 607-342-3660
  - **Plant of the Month:** John Gilrein, [basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu](mailto:basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu), 315-492-0844
  - **Newsletter editor/Webmaster:** Craig Cramer, [cdcramer@twcny.rr.com](mailto:cdcramer@twcny.rr.com), 607-539-7233
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## Green Dragon Tales

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