

# NEWS

*from the Arnold Arboretum*

## A Rhododendron Display Garden for the Case Estates

*Robert E. Cook, Director*

Last November, after more than a year of discussion, I signed a collaborative agreement with the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society that will permit the Society to develop a five-acre display garden at the Case Estates in Weston, Massachusetts. This agreement facilitates a long-standing partnership to grow and display the finest rhododendrons hardy in New England. The Society now plans to expand its collections with examples of the work of prominent New England hybridizers such as Ed Mezitt of Weston Nurseries.

For over a decade the Arboretum has struggled to justify the annual expenditure of approximately \$150,000 for the maintenance of the land and buildings of the Case Estates, which was donated to the Arboretum nearly half a century ago. Located ten miles from our living collections in Jamaica Plain, the Estates was used many years ago as a suburban nursery for plants propa-



*Rhododendron 'Album Elegans'*

gated in the greenhouses at the Arboretum. During the many years when Dr. Donald Wyman lived in one of the houses there, he established display collections of horticultural cultivars throughout the landscape. In 1978, several years after the retirement of Dr. Wyman, the collections policy of the Arboretum was thoroughly revised to concentrate on wild-collected species (rather

than cultivars), a change consistent with the original intentions of Charles Sprague Sargent, the director of the Arboretum for its first fifty-five years.

By the 1980s, the container production of propagated plants on site at the Arboretum was far more

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efficient than transport to and from a suburban nursery. Forty acres of fallow Case Estates land was sold to the Town of Weston in 1985. In 1988, a new mission statement for the Arboretum contained no explicit goal to develop display collections of horticulturally interesting cultivars. Consequently, in 1991, I relocated the grounds staff from Weston to our primary collections in Jamaica Plain. We now manage the Estates' land through a local landscape contractor, and we continue to hold horticultural classes there.

Despite this changing role for the Case Estates, many people missed the pleasures of horticultural display collections there. Now the license with the Rhododendron Society allows an organization whose mission is dedicated to cultivars and their display to develop a landscape garden without great cost to the Arboretum. Although we receive no financial benefit from allowing this use of the land, we will be able to incorporate the Society's collections into appropriate classes in our education program. Because the display garden will be open to the public free of charge, it will surely make a real contribution to gardening and horticulture in New England.

*Bob Cook*

## Visitor Survey

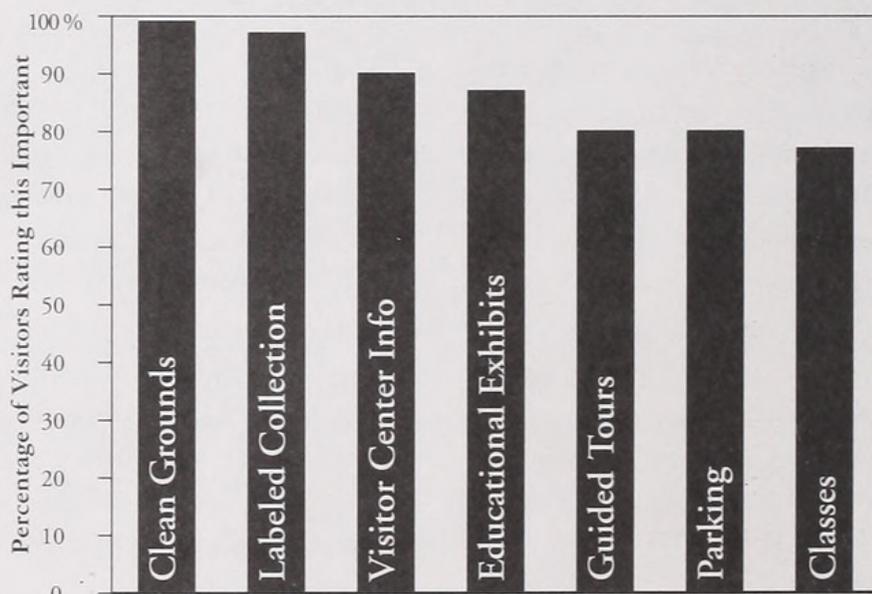
What do visitors value most about the Arnold Arboretum? How do people get here, and what are their needs and interests once they arrive? To find the answers to these and other questions, Arboretum staff, volunteers and Rangers from the Olmsted National Historic Site surveyed the interests and impressions of over five hundred visitors during a six-week period in the spring in 1992. Visitors were asked to respond to a questionnaire on basic demographic information—age, zip code, visit frequency—as well as a range of questions on what they enjoy about the Arboretum and what they'd like to see in the future.

Coordinated by staff member Jim Gorman, the survey provided some invaluable information about the Arboretum visitor.

We discovered, for instance, that during the study period a full 70% of our visitors came by automobile, 15% by foot, 9% used public transportation, and 6% came by bicycle. And what was important to these visitors once they arrived? As shown by the accompanying graph, 99% stressed the importance of clean, well-maintained grounds, 96% stressed the importance of well-labeled collections, 90% valued visitor center information, and 87% emphasized the importance of educational exhibits.

These and other survey results will inform plans to better provide for the educational interests and basic needs of our estimated 250,000 annual visitors. Special thanks go to volunteers Lyn Gaylord, Anne Joseph, Pauline Perkins, Loren Stolow, and Arlene Theis.

### WHAT DO YOU THINK IS MOST IMPORTANT AT THE ARBORETUM?



## Aid for the Fairchild Tropical Garden

Before sunrise on August 24, Fairchild Tropical Garden in Miami, Florida, was devastated by Hurricane Andrew. Winds of over 165 mph swept away many of the Garden's renowned botanical collections of palms and cycads from around the world. The largest tropical botanical garden in the continental United States was reduced to a tangle of broken trunks and leafless branches. Staff at the Fairchild estimate that about seventy percent of the trees were blown over or snapped.

Botanical triage, selecting which trees should be cut and which might survive replanting with the aid of cranes and braces, began within six days. The Garden was not fully insured against damage, and funds to cover the costs of restoration, new greenhouses, and shade cloth areas are needed.

In response to the distress call issued to colleagues in the horticultural and botanical community by the Fairchild's Director, Dr. William McK. Klein, Jr., Arboretum Director Robert E. Cook forwarded a contribution from the Arboretum and especially from the Arnold Arboretum Associates. The \$5000 contribution represents a portion of the net profit from our annual Rare Plant Auction held last September.

## Phyllis Andersen Joins Arboretum Staff

The Arnold Arboretum is pleased to announce that Phyllis Andersen has joined the staff as Landscape Historian. She will be working on implementation of the Arboretum's cooperative agreement with the National Park Service that includes the development of a curriculum plan for training professionals in historic landscape preservation techniques. She will also be partici-



*Phyllis Andersen*

pating with other AA staff members in a plant identification project at three National Park Service sites in New England: the Longfellow House in Cambridge; the Adams National Historic Site, Quincy; and the Saint Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish, New Hampshire.

Phyllis has been a consultant to a number of government agencies including the Boston Parks Department, the M.W.R.A., and the Department of Environmental Management. She is an instructor in the Radcliffe Seminars Graduate Program in Landscape Design and has also taught at the Boston Architectural Center and in the Yale College Seminar Program.



*With the Hunnewell Visitor Center closed for renovations, participants in the Arboretum's Field Study Experiences Program enjoyed temporary quarters under a tent in the fall landscape.*

### WANTED!

**Rollerskates with dogwood wheels and other treasures!!**

In preparation for an Arnold Arboretum exhibit on the role of wood in New England history, we are looking for 18th-, 19th-, and early 20th-century wooden objects. If you have any wood tools, utensils, machine parts, or other objects you'd be willing to donate or loan, please call Richard Schulhof at 617/524-1718 x113.

## Upcoming Lecture Series

### *Landscapes in Transition: Rethinking Regionalism*

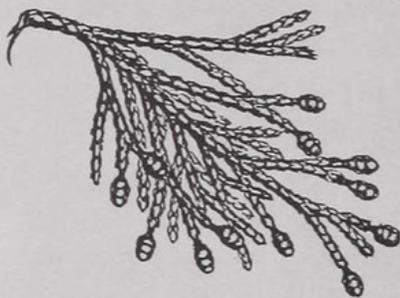
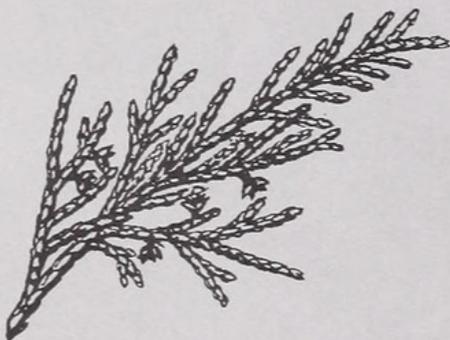
The Arnold Arboretum joins the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site of the National Park Service; the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Department of Landscape Architecture; and Historic Massachusetts Inc. in sponsoring this series of lectures. All are free of charge and will be held in Piper Auditorium, the Harvard University Graduate School of Design at 48 Quincy Street, Cambridge, at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call the Olmsted Historic Site at 617/566-1689.

4 FEBRUARY 1993

#### LANDSCAPE AND THE AMERICAN WRITER

*William Howarth,  
Princeton University*

Drawing on the works of Hemingway, Faulkner, and recent writers such as Annie Dillard and Barry Lopez, Professor Howarth examines American ideas of space and region and the tendency of our artists to invoke a nostalgic "sense of place" in response to environmental change.



18 FEBRUARY 1993

#### 100 YEARS OF THE METROPOLITAN PARK SYSTEM

Program Moderator

*Alan Altschuler*

*Harvard University*

Panel

*M. Ilyas Shatti*

*MDC Commissioner*

*William J. Geary*

*MDC Commissioner 1983-1989*

*John W. Sears*

*MDC Commissioner 1970-1975*

The Boston Metropolitan Park System celebrates its centennial as one of the nation's earliest examples of regional park planning. Karl Haglund, MDC Planner, will present an overview of its history. The panel will discuss the past, present, and future of these treasured lands. A reception will follow the program.

4 MARCH 1993

#### INTEGRATING SOCIAL NEEDS AND CONSERVATION; CASE STUDIES FROM THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S BIORESERVE PROGRAM

*George Fenwick*

*The Nature Conservancy*

Mr. Fenwick will describe current Nature Conservancy projects including the Virginia Coast Reserve and the Texas Hill Country, which

link regional and community needs to large-scale ecosystem protection.

18 MARCH 1993

#### THE FUTURE OF THE GREAT PLAINS; A PRESERVATION PROPOSAL

*Frank Popper and Deborah Popper,  
Rutgers University*

Mounting economic and environmental difficulties provide the background for this landscape preservation proposal for the Great Plains — sometimes called Buffalo Commons — and its implications for other rural regions.

#### NEW PUBLICATION!

The 1993 edition of the Arnold Arboretum's *Inventory of Living Collections* has just been published. This 161-page, bound volume lists all the names and locations of the 5,909 different plant taxa found in the Arboretum's magnificent living collections. In addition, this new edition of the inventory contains over fifty full-page illustrations of many Arboretum plants, reprinted from *A Student's Atlas of Flowering Plants* by Carroll E. Wood, Jr., professor emeritus and former Arboretum staff member.

Copies of the inventory can be obtained by sending a check made out to the Arnold Arboretum in the amount of \$20.00 to:

*Arnold Arboretum Inventory*  
The Arnold Arboretum  
125 Arborway  
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130



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