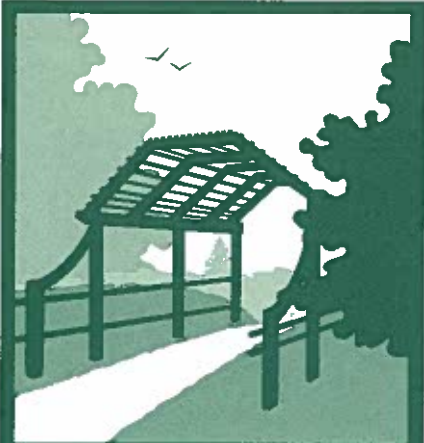


# Arboretum Notes



FRIENDS  
of the ACTON  
ARBORETUM

May 2008 | Volume III | Issue I

## Our Mission

*To raise and donate funds, materials and services to the Town of Acton for the development and maintenance of the Acton Arboretum; to educate the community about the unique environmental, horticultural, geological and historical qualities of the Arboretum property, about the process of wetland and field succession, and, in an era of decreasing public funds and natural resources, about conservation, effective horticultural practice; and generally to do all the things permitted to non profit organizations under the provisions of Chapter 180 of the General Laws of Massachusetts and Section 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1984, as from time to time they are amended.*

BECOME A MEMBER

FRIENDS of the ACTON  
ARBORETUM, INC.

P.O. Box 2607  
Acton, MA 01720

## Universal Trail Fragrance Garden

The Friends of the Acton Arboretum developed this project to build new trails that could enhance the experience of the Acton Arboretum for many visitors, especially including those with physical disabilities.

A site was chosen and prepared in the summer of 2005 by Acton Natural Resources Director Tom Tidman and Municipal Properties Director Dean Charter by removing trees, lifting out root masses and adding loam. A water line was extended to the site. Sixty-nine lilacs, representing 21 cultivars, purchased with funds donated in memory of Franklin Charter, were planted along the right side of the Wildflower Loop approaching the farm ponds.

It was also brought to our attention by board member, Ken Mayer, that his employer, Wayne Mezitt of Weston Nurseries, wanted to donate a collection of fragrant azaleas. For people with sight or mobility disabilities, it would delightfully make more accessible the sensual experience of flowering shrubs.

A proposal for creating a stone dust trail connecting to the other universal access trail was written by Cathy Hatfield in the fall of 2005. This \$24,000 proposal by the Town of Acton was approved by the Acton Community Preservation Committee in early 2006 and approved at Town Meeting in April 2006. The work went out to bid in the spring and summer and Lenox Nurseries was hired to install the trail in the fall of 2006. 850 feet of new handicapped accessible trail begins where the trails from the Herb Garden and Butterfly Garden merge. Grass seed was planted and sprouted beautifully by the end of fall, 2007.



Boy Scout, Derek Wise, built a gradual, low stonewall between the lilacs and the lower trail loop. A black walnut tree is centered where the trail loops back to return to the Wildflower Loop. Future plans for the site include adding benches, and of course planting the fragrant azaleas. Come and visit this new site, especially this spring when the lilacs begin to bloom!

# Quince

## **Chaenomeles speciosa**

USDA Zones 4 to 8.

Color: Red or orange; cultivars can be white, pink or salmon. Dark green shiny leaves.

Description: Rounded shrub, tangle of branches; bark becomes corrugated with age. Leathery foliage. Fruit egg shaped, citron yellow; some varieties are good for jam making.

Height: 5 feet and taller.

Soil: Sandy, well drained.

Light: Full sun to part shade.

Bloom time: April.

Cultivars: 'Cameo', 'Jet-Trail', 'Texas Scarlet'

Forcing: Yes, February to mid March. Easy to grow. Vase life 5-7 days.

The blaze of red and orange that is seen in stark contrast to the whites and pastels of typical New England flowering trees is often the Japanese Flowering Quince. The shrub was cultivated in colonial times for jams and jellies, as the fruit is not suitable for consumption without cooking it. The Arboretum Herb Garden has a large planting of Quince, pictured in red, harkening back to its culinary use.

Quince branches are quite thorny. Cultivars have been bred that extend the species color range of red and orange to white, pink and salmon. Some are thornless. *Chaenomeles x superba* 'Cameo' is thornless and has double peach color blooms against bright green glossy leaves.



# Recent Projects

May 1st was Senior Community Service Day at the Acton Arboretum and was very successful. Thanks to Cathy Hatfield for organizing the volunteers and planning the work list. Thanks to Bettina Abe and Ken Mayer for providing tools and wheelbarrows. Thanks to Joan Yatteau, Nan Millett, and Mary Donald for chaperoning. A special thanks to Dick Tavernier for joining us at the last minute. We added some of the items on his list to our list and got them done too!

This is what the five teams of 25-29 students accomplished in three hours:

- Raked out a pile of loam by the Main Street sign and seeded the area with grass seed
- Cut back some Japanese knotweed
- Rakes leaves from the day lily bed
- Raised about 20 feet of cobbles by the swale section of the trail
- Added stone dust to both ends of the bridge that crosses the swale to raise up the level for wheelchairs and strollers
- Weeded the tree rings in the crabtree alley
- Added wood chips to the Taylor Street edge of the stone wall by the day lilies
- Weeded and mulched the nursery
- Created tree rings from lawn around more trees in the main lawn area -- did about 7 more!
- Removed a fallen apple tree from a section of the Orchard Loop
- Relocated a broken bench and other debris to the brush pile
- Reinstalled the Woodland Loop sign post
- Installed post #13 near the Lilac Garden
- Weeded in the Lilac Garden
- Added stone dust to the edge of the boardwalk by the fern garden, covering the depressed section of boardwalk
- Filled in a large pothole with stone dust at the end of the driveway into the parking lot

All the students worked hard and had lots of fun! Take some time to check out the work.



Eagle Scout candidate Derek Wise constructed a serpentine stone retaining wall in the Fragrance Garden in fall of 2007. It separates the hillside of lilacs and the walking trail in the center of the garden. Summer blooming azaleas will be planted in the bed above the wall, making it a useful as well as picturesque addition to the Arboretum.



Eagle Scout candidate Joshua Crofton-MacDonald tackled invasive species removal in the fall of 2007. He removed an entire hedgerow snarled with multiflora rose from the center of the open lawn area, the site of the Arboretum's original nursery. The project opened up the vista, revealing the grid of apple trees. The area has been replanted with grass and plans are set to add a large drift of daffodils to the bed in the fall of 2008.

*The charm of a woodland road lies not only in its beauty but in anticipation.*

*Around each bend may be a discovery, an adventure.*

## Membership Application

# Friends of the Acton Arboretum

### WHO ARE THE FRIENDS?

We are a group of citizens who care about the natural world and share a vision of preserving and enhancing our natural resources for educational purposes. Friends contribute time, money, plants and other gifts and talents in support of the Acton Arboretum in order to achieve these goals.

Membership benefits for Friends include: a biannual newsletter, seasonal walks, talks and workshops, and civic pride in a special gift of land used for enjoyment and education.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ I am a  NEW MEMBER  RETURNING MEMBER

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP (CHECK ONE)

INDIVIDUAL | \$15     FAMILY | \$25     SUPPORTING | \$40     CORPORATE | \$100

CONTACT ME FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Commemorative gifts, honoring marriages, births, deaths or other special dates, are gratefully accepted and recorded in a commemorative listing.

PLEASE DETACH AND MAIL TO: FRIENDS OF THE ACTON ARBORETUM, INC. | P.O. BOX 2607 | ACTON, MA 01720

## School District Donation

The Friends of the Acton Arboretum recently assembled seven sets of thirty pocket packets each, one for each of the seven schools that comprise the Acton and Acton-Boxborough School system. Each pocket packet has two self-guided tours and four lists of selected plants, one for each for the Butterfly, Herb, Hosta and Wildflower gardens. This gift was presented to Eileen Sullivan and Deborah Bookis, Curriculum Specialists for Acton Public Schools and Acton Boxborough Regional School District.

The ABRHS Envirothon team is utilizing the material for this year's topic, "Outdoor Recreation and the Environment". Their presentation is about recreational use of the Acton Arboretum and proposes to create a downloadable iPodcast of the Acton Arboretum self-guided tour information.



## President's Message

Dear Friends,

The Friends of the Acton Arboretum have developed a website that provides a necessary link to our members and the public. Please visit [www.actonarboratum.org](http://www.actonarboratum.org) and send correspondence to [info@actonarboratum.org](mailto:info@actonarboratum.org).

Many generous donations are in the works to help establish the new Fragrance Garden. Wayne Mezitt of Weston Nursery is donating a collection of summer blooming azaleas. The Friends of Dottie Hilbert are establishing a lovely seating area featuring curved benches and associated plantings. Friends of Pat MacMillan are donating a dramatic daffodil planting that is planned for the site of Joshua Crofton-MacDonald's Eagle Scout project, evocative of Wordsworth's poem, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud".

It is dues renewal time. Your mailing label date reflects the **expiration date** of your membership. Please check your mailing label to determine if your membership is due for renewal. We appreciate your continued support, which we wish to acknowledge by sending you a free packet of our newest guides to the Arboretum.

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc. takes place on Thursday, June 26, 2008, at the Reading Circle in the Arboretum at 6:30 P.M. (We meet at Town Hall in case of rain). A two-part business meeting will follow a short social. After the meeting, as daylight allows, we will take a walk through the Arboretum to discuss upcoming projects. Please join us.

Cathy Fochtman, President



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## What's Happening



### Pocket Packets & Annual Meeting

The Friends of the Acton Arboretum have released a collection of Arboretum reference materials, the "Pocket Packet". It contains self-guided tours, "Upper Grounds" and "The Back 40", and illustrated plant lists from the Wildflower, Hosta, Butterfly and Herb garden collec-

tions. These publications are provided free to 2008 new members. They may be also purchased as a packet of five items for \$5 from the Acton Town Clerk at Town Hall.

Please join the Friends of the Acton Arboretum for their Annual Meeting on

Thursday, June 26 at 6:30pm at the Acton Arboretum Reading Circle. Rain location will be at Acton Town Hall. A two-part business meeting will follow a short social. After the meeting, as daylight allows, we will take a walk through the Arboretum to discuss upcoming projects.