

Arboretum Notes



FRIENDS
of the ACTON
ARBORETUM

May 2005 | Volume 9 | Issue 1

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



The Upper Grounds: Visitors Enjoy Our New Self-Guided Tour



Visitors of all ages can enjoy the many facets of the Upper Grounds using our Self-Guided Tour

Introducing the first in a series of new educational materials for the Acton Arboretum: a self-guided tour of the Upper Grounds. This pocket-sized guide opens up to an 11" x 14" full color map identifying points of interest along the Orchard Loop and Wildflower Loop trails. The other side of the guide lists detailed descriptions of thirteen stops labeled by number on the map. Thirteen green-faced cedar posts with white numbers have been installed along the trails to identify the locations. The tour begins at the Taylor Rd. parking lot. Stops along the tour include the Swale Garden, Wooden Footbridge, Hosta Garden, Butterfly Garden, Herb Garden, Old Apple Orchard, Dug Pond, Open Meadow, Red Maple Swamp, Farm Quarries, Wildflower Garden, Farm Ponds, and Lilac Collection.

This project has been funded through the cooperation of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum, the Town of Acton Conservation Department, Process, Inc., and a grant from the William P. Wharton Trust.

The new self-guided tour is provided free with this newsletter to members of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum. Save your guide for future visits. Additional plans for distributing tour guides to the public will be announced in the near future. Look for a notice in the kiosk and an announcement in local newspapers for further information.



PHOTOS:

Top Left: View from under a crabapple tree of the hosta garden and footbridge.

Top Right: The hosta garden is tour stop # 3 on the new Self-Guided Tour of the Upper Grounds.

Bottom: The crabapple orchard in bloom.

Friends Receive Grant and Top Award for Education

The William P. Wharton Trust supports conservation, study and appreciation of nature through projects with tangible and lasting results

The Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc. was awarded a **\$6,400.00 grant** from the William P. Wharton Trust of Boston in November 2004. The grant project's objective is to produce an integrated set of printed and electronic educational materials. The materials will explore many aspects of the Acton Arboretum to meet the needs of the various constituencies who use the Arboretum:

- A new design template for the Arboretum Notes newsletter and new Friends of the Acton Arboretum logo.
- A self-guided tour of the Arboretum's upper grounds.
- A self-guided tour of the Arboretum's "Back 40" wooded acres.
- An annotated version of the self-guided tour of the upper grounds for the physically disabled.
- A set of cards that will educate visitors about topics such as tree identification, seasonal bird visitors, resident animals, property history, and recommended plants for the home gardener that are found in the hosta, butterfly, herb and wildflower collections.
- An Arboretum website to provide educational material to the public.

The first two items have been delivered with the generous help of Lynn Horsky of Process, Inc. of Littleton, who donated her design assistance. The next items under development this year will be the self-guided tour

of the "Back 40" wooded acres of the property and the recommended plants project. Volunteers who care for the plant collections are developing plant lists of recommended specimens for the home gardener. These numbered lists will be printed on cards for visitors. The numbers will correspond to plant labels. Labels and signs with detailed descriptions of each plant will be installed initially in the butterfly and wildflower gardens.



PHOTO: Acton Arboretum educational exhibit won top award from Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts. Two photo panels flank table.

A photographic display featuring arboretum gardens at the height of bloom won a blue ribbon and the **top educational award** in the special exhibits division of the standard flower show, "In Search of Paradise," sponsored by the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts held at Tower Hill Botanic Garden, in Boylston, MA, November 12-14, 2004. The display was designed and exhibited by Cathy Fochtman and Joan Yatteau, members of the board of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc.

These materials allow us to foster our visitors' appreciation of the unique environmental, horticultural, geological, and historical qualities of the Arboretum property.

Ten gardens or plant collections, each profusely illustrated with large color photos, showed the special beauty found in so many parts of the Arboretum from early spring to late fall, truly a paradise in our very own backyard. Shown were some of the special trees in the arboretum such as magnolia, paper-bark maple, dawn redwood, and the weeping katsura tree near the butterfly garden. Gardens featured were the daylily, hosta, herb, swale, butterfly, fern, bog, rhododendron, and wildflower gardens.

Teaching points about each garden or plant community accompanied the photos, including information, for example, about plant varieties, growing conditions, history of the arboretum, traditional uses of herbs, invasive plants in the arboretum, and conservation of native wildflowers. A tabbed tabletop flip chart displayed additional educational materials. Included were teaching materials used with Acton elementary school students in their hands-on educational experiences led by Tom Tidman, Natural Resources Director for the Town of Acton, using the arboretum as their classroom. The new self-guided tour of the arboretum was also displayed.

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

Around each bend may be a discovery, an adventure.

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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

President's Message

Join us on Thursday, June 23rd for the Friends Annual Meeting

The Arboretum is looking better than ever this spring after many volunteer groups have worked hard once more to spruce it up for the growing season. Groups from "regular" gardeners to 7th and 12th graders have devoted many hours to weeding, mulching, painting, and planting. I invite you to enjoy the Arboretum once more in all its spring glory.

If you've wondered about the numbered posts recently installed along the main loop trails, then your questions will be answered when you open the first self-guided tour that accompanies this newsletter. I hope it piques your interest and inspires yet another walk. The Acton Conservation Commission Land Stewards recently assisted us with blazing the trails in the woodland areas of the arboretum. Later in the season, you might see an area being mowed along the path going towards the farm ponds. That effort is the first step in a project to create a lilac garden along that trail on its southerly slope. A bench has been donated by sisters Holly Guaraldi and Kelly Coyle and will be installed at the end of the Butterfly Garden, in memory of their mother, Vera Coyle.

It is membership renewal time and a form has been provided above for you to submit your annual dues. Look at the address label on this newsletter to see when you last renewed. Remember, FAA members will be the first ones to receive the additional educational materials as they are created.



PHOTO: View of the rhododendron garden from the center of the Open Meadow, tour stop #8 on the new self-guided tour. The pyramidal tree at the center is *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* (Dawn Redwood). To its right is *Larix kaempferi* (Japanese Larch). This collection demonstrates how these species can be used in a natural setting.

Join us for the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc. on Thursday June 23, 2005, 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, including the new lilac garden. Please join us.

Cathy Hatfield, President



What's Happening



Inside this Issue:

New Self-Guided Tour Map of the Upper Grounds

Friends Receive Educational Grant from William P. Wharton Trust and GCFM Award

Membership Application and President's Message

PHOTO: Reading Circle on Orchard Loop

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum is scheduled for Thursday, June 23, 2005. It will begin at 6:30 pm at the Acton Arboretum Reading Circle. An informal walk will follow the business meeting. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will

be moved to Acton Town Hall and the meeting room will be posted in the lobby. All members of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum are invited to attend.

Arboretum Notes was produced by Cathy Fochtman, Cathy Hatfield and Joan Yatteau.