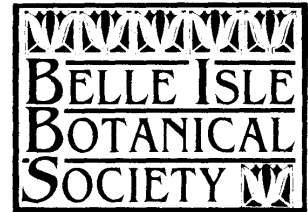




FALL 2011
VOLUME XXIII NO. 3



SUPPORTING
THE ANNA SCRIPPS WHITCOMB
CONSERVATORY AND GARDENS



Levi Barbour Fountain

Celebrate the Start of Fall
By Taking
Stepping Stones
To Renewal

Village Garden Club

Sponsors BIBS Fundraiser

The continuing renovation of the gardens surrounding the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory on Belle Isle gets another boost on Tues., Sept. 13, when the Village Garden Club of Grosse Pointe hosts the fifth fall fundraiser for the Belle Isle Botanical Society: *Stepping Stones to Renewal*. Co-chairs for this

year's event are Cheryl Gauss and Barbara Grogan. Guests can mingle under the tent fronting the Conservatory, stroll the botanical houses inside or peruse the gardens. "We began a very special relationship with the gardening clubs of the Grosse Pointe area several years ago and the fruition of that is seen in our magnificent Lily Pond, our botanical signage throughout the facility, our new garden staircases and now the replacement of the flagstones around the Marshall Fredericks-sculpted fountain," says Jan Ellison, BIBS president. *Tickets for the early evening event are \$40 person – information for ordering is on our website: www.bibsociety.org.*

Lily Pond Cleanup

Sat., Oct. 22, 10:30 a.m.



Join your fellow BIBS friends for a morning of labor. Lunch is on BIBS! Bring your gardening tools.

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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

From Jan Ellison

Plans to fold the Belle Isle Botanical Society into the newly formed Belle Isle Conservancy continued through the summer. Meanwhile, the invitations are out for BIBS' popular fundraiser – this year titled Stepping Stones to Renewal – and the promise is a delightful evening for a worthy cause. Finally, BIBS is buttoning down details to ensure heating and electrical systems are in order this winter. Here's more:

Conservancy Update: The mission of the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC) is to protect, preserve, restore and enhance the natural environment, historic structures and unique character of Belle Isle as a public park for the enjoyment of all, now and forever. The BIC vision is that Belle Isle will be a fully restored, supported and well-maintained public park offering environmental, educational, cultural and recreational experiences that capture the hearts and imaginations of its visitors.

That said, we've been rolling up our sleeves and getting to work. Representatives from BIBS, the Friends of Belle Isle (FOBI), the Belle Isle Women's Committee and Friends of the Belle Isle Aquarium (FBIA) are forming the new board of the BIC by studying candidates who have both a passion for Belle Isle and a desire to work hard to make it a premier destination for visitors. Each organization will have a representative on the board; the City of Detroit will have five spots; total directors will be between 15 and 31. The board's makeup will be finalized shortly. There also is a committee structure; the Conservancy is a subcommittee of the Island Preservation Committee. Next up is voting by both BIBS and FOBI to formally join the Conservancy.

Stepping Stones Fundraiser: Join us Tuesday, Sept. 13, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., as we take *Stepping Stones to Renewal*. There'll be cocktails and hors d'oeuvres "under the tent" hosted by the Village Garden Club with proceeds going to renovate the flagstone pathway around the Levi Barbour Memorial Fountain, sculpted by Marshall Fredericks 75 years ago. The pathway is sunk and overgrown with weeds. Restoring this area will highlight the sculpture whose main figure is a leaping gazelle surrounded by animals native to the island – rabbit, hawk, otter and grouse. Board Member Kathleen Katkin currently is getting quotes for this project so it can commence after the fundraiser.

Scott Fountain Fundraiser Result: BIBS contributed \$5,000 toward a FOBI/City of Detroit project to restore the Pewabic Pottery tiles lining the Scott Fountain's main basin. The original cost of the tiles, designed by Mary Chase Perry Stratton in 1930, was \$1,500. Renovation cost now is estimated at upwards of \$150,000. FOBI held a fundraiser at Pewabic Pottery this summer to build the renovation support.

Winter Readiness: There will be extensive electrical work done in the Conservatory this fall. Detroit Electrical Services will do energy-saving lighting improvements plus extend the heating units in the Fernery. Right now, the west section of the Fernery and Cactus House are without power – this will be repaired. Another contractor, Motor City Electric, will install new transformers in the Conservatory and greenhouses to address power problems there. It also will replace existing power
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Calendar of Events

Your Guide to Fall Happenings

African Adventure Series

Saturdays: Sept. 3, 24, Oct. 1, 22

1:30-3 p.m.

Belle Isle Nature Zoo

Listen, learn and enjoy real Africa wildlife stories and folklore from David Gakure, zoo education specialist. Sponsored by Comerica Charitable Foundation. Free. For more, 313-852-4056

Friends of Detroit River Dinner Cruise

Thurs., Sept. 8

6-9 p.m.

Sails from Bishop Park on the Diamond Jack, touring the lower river between Wyandotte and Belle Isle. Tickets \$50 per person. Use PayPal on FDR website or mail to FDR office, 2674 W. Jefferson, Suite LL1, Trenton, MI 48183

Stepping Stones to Renewal

Annual BIBS Fundraiser

Tues., Sept. 13

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Belle Isle Conservatory Gardens

Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and cocktails under the tent in the gardens fronting the Conservatory. The Village Garden Club is hosting this year's event to fund restoration of the flagstones surrounding the historic Levi Barbour Memorial Fountain, sculpted by Marshall Fredericks in 1936. Tickets \$40 person. See reservation coupon in this newsletter. For more, call 313-331-7760.



Musicians at *A Step Back in Time*

Stewardship Days

Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 19

9 a.m.-Noon

Meet at Nature Zoo Auditorium

The Environmental and Conservation section of the Island Observation Committee, headed by Mebby Pearson, works on removing invasive plants from the island. To volunteer, contact Mebby, 248-647-7841 or melvadean.pearson@gmail.com.

Elmwood Cemetery Tour

Sun., Oct. 2

1-3 p.m.

1200 Elmwood, near downtown Detroit

The Detroit Garden Center once again offers a tour of this historic cemetery. Cheryl English, advanced master gardener, and Chancey Miller, Elmwood historian, team up to identify trees and residents including histories of Michigan's leading citizens interred there. Elmwood is considered among the top 10 historical cemeteries in the U.S. Tickets \$12. For more, 313-259-6363 or detroitgardencenter@yahoo.com.

Herbal Salve Workshop

Sat., Oct. 15

10 a.m.-Noon

Detroit Garden Center

1900 E. Jefferson, Ste 227, Detroit

Take home a container of herbal salve made with all natural ingredients. Skin soothing herbs are infused into an all-natural base. Barbara Hayes, instructor. Fee \$12. For more, 313-259-6363 or detroitgardencenter@yahoo.com.

Native Plant ID and Propagation Workshop

Sat., Nov. 5

10 a.m.-Noon

Belle Isle Nature Zoo

Learn to identify native plants and their seed heads. Take home eight to 10 different native species for your garden. Suzan Campbell, instructor. Fee \$25. For more, call 313-259-6363 or detroitgardencenter@yahoo.com.

Belle Isle Women's Committee Restores the Roof Island's historic stable buildings Get new topper

The Belle Isle Women's Committee is restoring the roof of the historic 1898 stable buildings as part of the organization's ongoing commitment to refurbish and beautify the island.

"The project began in August and will continue through the fall," says Sarah Earley, president. Royal Roofing is the contractor for the roof and the tiles are supplied by Ludowici Tile and Boston Valley Terra Cotta, she said. "The entire roof will be redone in red clay."

Once completed, the project will represent a BIWC investment of over \$700,000 in the park.

BIBS & Golightly Team up for plant sale

For the first time, BIBS and the Golightly Career and Technical Center Agriscience Program joined together for the annual plant sale, held last May.

"It was a combination we really enjoyed putting together," says Jan Ellison, BIBS president. "We used our skills to good advantage," she adds, noting the sale grossed over \$25,000.

To prepare, volunteers from BIBS, the Agriscience Advisory Board and students worked through the winter propagating plants. BIBS took on tomatoes and perennials while students grew herbs, vegetables, annuals and stunning hanging baskets.

At the sale itself – held for the first time on two weekend days – BIBS volunteers and students worked together ringing up sales and assisting customers. "Now that we've done this joint venture once, we are studying ways to cut costs to make this an even better win-win for both groups," says Ellison.



Courtesy, Lauren Busek

Federal funds support Aquarium Restoration

The shuttered Belle Isle Aquarium is getting a share of federal funds from the Historic Preservation Fund administered by Michigan's State Historic Preservation Office.

Part will be used for architectural plans and part for construction to put a new roof on the 100-year-old plus building.

"Charles Merz and Tony Maceratini of Merz and Associates are the architects who are preparing the drawings that will enable construction to begin in May 2012. They are donating a large portion of their services to boot – and we are most thankful," says Jennifer Boardman, Secretary of the Friends of the Belle Isle Aquarium

Total grant monies, with matching funds from the Friends of Belle Isle Aquarium, are upwards of \$75,000.

BIBS through the years...

Making a Difference

As the Belle Isle Botanical Society readies itself to become part of the soon-to-come Belle Isle Conservancy, we thought it fitting to give ourselves a few rounds of applause. Here are some highlights of what we have accomplished to maintain and vitalize the Conservatory.



Joe Stanton, BIBS co-founder

1988: Bill Horman and the late Joseph Stanton meet with

Manager Al

Wright, Forestry Superintendent Paul Hynes and Floriculture Supervisor Jim Justus to discuss the formation of BIBS. First officers are Lisa Flint, president; Maber Hill, vice president; Kathy Frank, secretary; and Susan Nisula, treasurer. Josephine Primeau designs the BIBS logo. First project: clean up and renovation of the Lily Pond.

1989: The Docent Program gets underway. Joe Stanton enlists greenhouse volunteers and donates 40 varieties of his hostas for the Lily Pond. Detroit Mayor Coleman Young writes to Board Member Jean Strickland, commending BIBS on "a fine job in the restoration of the Lily Pond."

1990: BIBS buys five trellises and climbing

hydrangeas for the Lily Pond garden and oversees decorating the Conservatory for Christmas. BIBS applies for non-profit status.



1991: Belle Isle staff continues to drop – from 60 in 1964 to 12 now. Lisa Flint resigns and Jan Ellison is elected as the second BIBS president, a position she has held for 20 years. Ed Krappmann is named chief docent, and remains so today.

1992: First BIBS plant sale, in June at the Casino. BIBS installs a sprinkler system in the Lily Pond Garden.

1993: First plant sale where BIBS grows its own plants. City initiates an admission charge for the Conservatory and the Aquarium. Attendance drops from 12,000 visitors in September to half that the next month. Fee eventually dropped, thanks to Bill Horman. There's the first *Stroll through the Conservatory* in December, an event that still continues. And, most significantly, BIBS begins the funding of equipment and repairs, an action critical to the lifeblood of the Conservatory.

1994: BIBS replaces glass in the Conservatory dome. The Lily Pond, with tender care from stalwart volunteers, grows more beautiful.

1995: BIBS funds vent and heat valve repairs in the Conservatory and purchases equipment for staff.

1996: BIBS puts overhead fans in the Show House. A hail storm knocks out 38 window panes in the dome.

1997: BIBS installs six circulating fans in the orchid greenhouses, which had been set up by the Michigan Orchid Society. BIBS pays \$5,000 to replace broken windows in the Palm House dome. A *Summer Soiree* is held – turns out to be the only one. City funds the sandblasting and painting of girders in the Palm House.

1998: BIBS funds the dome ladder repairs. The Fisher Building in the New Center Area is the site of an art show, *Flora Botanica*, directed by Tom Wojtas, with proceeds of \$3,500 going to BIBS and the Conservatory.

1999: BIBS goes online with its initial web site set up by member, Ann St. Clair. *Flora Botanica* held again, this time at the Conservatory.

2000: BIBS goes to the Detroit City Council, aided by Councilman Nicholas Hood, to lay out the needs of the Conservatory and BIBS' contributions to the facility. BIBS begins assisting the Golightly Agriscience Program with grants for plant material and supplies. The City of Detroit completes asbestos abatement in the Greenhouses.

2001: BIBS begins participating in Friends of Belle Isle's annual February funfest, *Shiver on the River*. BIBS awarded Adopt-a-Park sign for the Conservatory.



Science Lab students

2002: A date palm is scratching the top of the dome. BIBS funds its removal as trimming is not feasible.

2003: BIBS funds more glass repairs and removes fallen boulders from the Lily Pond.

2004: The Conservatory celebrates its 100th

birthday. Member Karen Pope launches the Science Learning Lab for schoolchildren, with materials for docents and students. She also organizes a Hat Party on Mother's Day in the Conservatory in conjunction with Friends of the Detroit Public Library. BIBS Vice President Jean Strickland passes away, a deep loss for the organization.



Jean Strickland,
BIBS VP extraordinaire

2005: The Aquarium closes and the fish removed. Friends of Belle Isle Aquarium is established. The Belle Isle Women's Committee holds its first *Polish the Jewel* luncheon – the setting is the Conservatory gardens. There also is BIBS' first *A Day in the Garden*, an educational forum for gardeners. BIBS pays for vent and roof repairs.

2006: BIBS begins a fruitful and beneficial relationship with the Grosse Pointe garden clubs with the aim of enriching fundraising for Conservatory projects. Special event *Arts and Orchids* attracts more than three dozen photographers who capture the



Conservatory's orchid collections along with lectures on the species. The City of Detroit gets an American Treasures grant to replace/repair the foundation, heating system and glass in the

dome. BIBS is honored at the second *Polish the Jewel* luncheon.

2007: The Junior League Gardeners host *Reflections on the Pond* for the fall fundraiser.



BIBS and the Friends of Belle Isle team up on office space and assistance on East Jefferson. Jan Ellison and Ed Krappmann publicize the Conservatory via Channel 56's *Get Up, Get Out* children's program. BIBS spends \$12,000 to vent repairs in the Show and Tropical houses, plus authorizes extensive glass repairs in both the Conservatory and Greenhouses.

2008: The Michigan Garden Club hosts *A Sign of Things to Come*, the fall fundraiser aimed at getting new plant signage in the Conservatory. The BIBS Web Site is revamped. In the Lily



Pond Garden, BIBS puts in new benches, replaces boulders, lines the pond and erects a viewing area – thanks to the Junior League Gardeners. BIBS spends \$18,000 to repair broken heat pipes.

2009: And then there was light! BIBS funds Arboricultural Services to perform the first palm pruning with glorious results. The Grosse Pointe Farm and Garden sponsor *Step into the Gardens* in the fall to fund repairs to the stairways in the garden.



Steve Turner in the Palms

2010: The year begins with a debacle as the heating system fails in January and the Conservatory is vulnerable. BIBS spends \$24,000 to lease propane heaters and fuel to keep the plants alive. The City eventually refunds BIBS \$12,000. Detroit then gets an \$8.8 million energy grant from the U.S. Department of Energy with a solid portion

targeted for the Conservatory for new boilers and electrical upgrades. The Grosse Pointe Garden

Club hosts *A Step Back in Time* to continue raising funds for staircase renovations. Work begins on the steps which turns out to



be more extensive than originally thought. BIBS enters into merger talks with the Friends of Belle Isle, the Belle Isle Women's Committee and the Friends of Belle Isle Aquarium to create the Belle Isle Conservancy.

2011: The Belle Isle Conservancy is expected to be in place by the end of the year. Meanwhile, work on the garden staircases has been completed. BIBS



installs 20 new urns to replace the ones which crumbled when the steps were renovated; the urns were dedicated to the memory of BIBS founder Joseph Stanton and Charter Members Jean Strickland and William Allen Paul. The 2011 fundraiser, hosted by the Village Garden Club on Sept. 13, is *Stepping Stones to Renewal* for the restoration of the flagstones around the garden fountain.

And so, a brief summing up of 23 years of BIBS history. We'll soon be part of the Conservancy but still striving to

Guests under the tent at *Step Into the Gardens*, 2009



William Allen Paul
1925-2011
Grand Friend of BIBS



It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to our faithful friend and Charter BIBS member, William Allen Paul. Allen, as we knew him, was the life partner of our founder, Joseph Stanton, served BIBS as Recording Secretary for many years, was a volunteer gardener

supreme, keeper of our membership lists, and general bon vivant.

We remember Allen in the now defunct Remembrance Rose Garden being attacked by a red-winged blackbird who drew blood from his bald pate, sitting on Nancy Ruhl's hot cross buns as we searched for a half hour for them, telling us the names of hostas and their correct pronunciation, having great Christmas soirees at his home on Burns and loving any good party that had an open bar.

Born in 1925, Allen served in the United State Army during the Korean War, attended Wayne State University, worked in the insurance industry and then for the Secretary of State until he retired. He lived for many years in Indian Village, was a member of the Indian Village Men's Garden Club, Indian Village Tennis Club and participated in various activities in that community. Allen,

an avid tennis fan and player well into his 70s, loved to watch the tennis channel and tennis on the internet. He moved to Grosse Pointe Park two years ago.

Allen was in poor health this past year, but never let it get him down. He had a wonderful sense of humor and a great knowledge of history, art, music, and the English language. It was not unusual for him to correct syntax and grammar, and we all learned proper vocabulary and sentence structure from him. Allen enjoyed classical music and jazz and loved listening to WRCJ. He was a voracious reader and while at the nursing homes would trade books with the staff. All of his caregivers, whether during the many hospital and nursing home stays or at American House East, loved to come to his room and hear his music and have great conversations.

He leaves behind a host of friends including his friend/caregiver, Douglas Mitchell, life friends Rolland and Fay O'Hare and BIBS comrade, Jan Ellison. We will all miss his impish smile, scintillating conversation and caustic wit.

"Now cracks a noble heart.
Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest"
Hamlet Act V scene ii
William Shakespeare



A favorite spot of Allen's: the Lily Pond

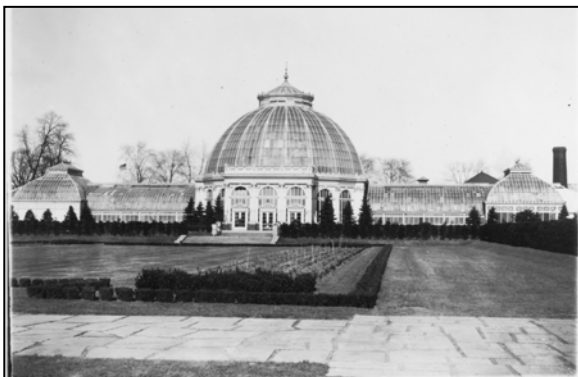
THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(from page 2)

outlets with ground fault interceptors and install a new electrical panel plus repair other electrical problems -- all funded by a bequest from Sylvia Becherer, a Charter Member. Finally, the boilers and heating systems have been upgraded and DTE is installing gas lines to give us a reliable and energy efficient heating system. Now our plants can transpire a carbon-dioxide filled sigh of relief to enjoy steady and consistent temperatures during the cold months ahead!!!

Urnings Update: The last two fall fundraisers, sponsored by the Grosse Pointe Garden Club and the Grosse Pointe Farm & Garden Club, raised over \$50,000 for the renovation of the garden staircases. In the renovation process, we found the old cement containers needed to be replaced. The BIBS Board voted to buy new urns from Telly's Greenhouse at a cost of \$4,000. They were be installed in memory of Joseph P. Stanton the co-founder of the Belle Isle Botanical Society and Charter Members Jean Strickland and William Allen Paul – a perfect way to remember them.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Janice Ellison, PRESIDENT; Diane Tumidajewicz, VICE PRESIDENT; Patricia Meldrum, SECRETARY; Michael Devine, TREASURER; MEMBERS-AT-LARGE – Ross Fazio, Adrienne Gregory, Kathleen Katkin, Ed Krappmann, Grady Merritt, Lee Ann Morgan, Ken Muha, Arthur Mullen, Mary Nebel, Clint Soldan. *Newsletter Editor-Anne Marie Sylvester*



The old Belle Isle Conservatory

VOLUNTEER CORNER

BIBS Helpers – Always Ready For Every Project

With the approaching Belle Isle Conservancy poised to put a fresh and exciting future on Belle Isle, BIBS Volunteer Coordinator Adrienne Gregory took a step back to applaud the myriads of volunteers who made countless BIBS projects a success.

“I got to know so many of you as we gardened in the Lily Pond on Saturdays, decorated Christmas trees in the Conservatory in December, slogged through March and April getting ready for the annual Plant Sale, then *worked* the Plant Sale in May,” Gregory recently reminisced.

“Plus, there were so many of the children’s educational tours as volunteers guided students of all ages through the Conservatory houses and had them feast on prickly pear cactus and guava juice,” she added. “You made my job easy,” she said in a salute to the organization’s scores of volunteers.

Summer Heat Stifled Adult Tours

Ed Krappmann, lead docent for adult tours of the Conservatory, says the summer’s hot spells resulted in many groups waiting until fall to make a visit. First up is the Jewish Historical Society in September.

To schedule a tour, contact Ed via BIBS at bibsociety@att.net or call BIBS at 313-331-7760.