

The Country Garden Club
1974 – 1983

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Meetings were held monthly September through June in member's homes. After the new Mount Laurel Library opened they began holding their meetings there. Only tea was served before the monthly meetings. The club also held executive meetings the first Tuesday of each month, from September through June and in 1977 the club revised their constitution.

During these years, membership ranged from 32 to 56 members, with 1 to 13 inactive members at a time. In 1977 Mrs. Elenda Weston was named the first "Member Emeritus" of the club. She was a Charter Member and served as Horticultural Chair from the beginning. From 1974 until 1978 dues were \$4.00 and inactive dues were \$3.00. In 1979 the dues were increased to \$5.00.

Club workshops were held at the Bank of West Jersey on Church Street, but when the club started holding their general meetings at the Library, workshops were then held at the Library too. Wreath making workshops were held in December at Ray's Garden Mart on Church Street which was owned by Hector and Elenda Weston. After a fire destroyed the Garden Mart wreath making was held at the Fellowship Fire House, and at the Colonial Rubber Warehouse, until they started using the Library.

Our members learned how to make flowers from sea shells, and from bread dough. Williamsburg arrangements, framed pressed flower wall hangings and miniature arrangements through the club's many workshops.

In May of 1977 the club sold home and garden tour tickets for \$2.00. There were judged intra club flower shows every spring and fall, with general meeting flower arranging workshops held before hand. In the spring of 1980 the club's flower show consisted of fresh and dried arrangements depicting various events, and in 1981 the show featured creative table arrangements. Both shows were open to the public at no charge and they were followed by a tea at the Mount Laurel Library.

The club's yearly events were the landscaping of trees and shrubs at various township schools along with the annual Arbor Day tree planting. The donation of gardening books and magazines to the library, and a fresh flower arrangement made by the members and placed at the circulation desk each week. April 1976 a \$300.00 scholarship was given to a graduating Lenape student and scholarships followed thereafter. Once a year the club decorated the library display case and landscaping and planting at the new Library courtyard began in January 1975. Held yearly also was a sponsored bus trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show and other sponsored bus trips over the years were to Duke Gardens, Longwood Gardens, and Bartram's Gardens to name a few.

In 1974 the President of the club was Mrs. Loretta (Lorey) Walz. The November Luncheon was called "Holiday Magic" and held at The Forum Inn. Tickets were \$5.50. They had a raffle and door prizes.

April 1974 was the 10th Anniversary of the club. A celebration was held at the Moorestown Community House at 7:30 pm. Invited were Past Presidents and 25 Charter members including the 6 that were still members of the club. The program was entitled "Spring Flower Arrangements". Punch was served before the presentation with dessert and coffee afterward.

Rubik's Cube puzzle was invented by Hungarian Professor Erno Rubik

In 1975 the President was Mrs. Marion Jenei. The November Luncheon was called "Make Your Own Merry Christmas" and held at the Mount Laurel Hilton. Bazaar items were for sale.

October 1975 our club contributed to the 10,000 tree reforestation program in Philadelphia Parks as part of the 1976 Bicentennial celebration.

Our club was awarded a first place trophy at the Cooper Hospital Horse Show, held at the Garden State Race Track. Members of the club designed and made a garland which was presented to the winner of the Arabian Horse Competition by the President.

January 15th Space Mountain opened in the Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World

In 1976 Mrs. Margaret Ware was President. The November Luncheon was called "Fashions and Flowers through the Ages" (1760-1950) and was held at Four Chefs (formally The Forum Inn) and presented by the Women's Auxiliary of Goodwill Industries. Flower arrangements were made by club members to coordinate with the fashions shown and the arrangements were awarded prizes. Tickets to the luncheon were sold.

Club received an honorable mention for their yearbook by Horticulture Magazine.

This year our club designed a 13 foot wide by 26 foot long American Flag on the lawn of the Mount Laurel Municipal Center for their Bicentennial project, and for many years thereafter they decorated this knoll.

July 6 first class of women inducted at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

In 1977 the President was Mrs. Janet Buchan. The November Luncheon was called "Christmas All Through the House". There was a raffle, door prizes and tickets were \$6.00.

A fall flower show sponsored by the Horticultural Society of South Jersey was held in the Community Center of Cherry Hill. Club members participated and our club took almost all the prizes.

Our club participated in "Christmas in Williamsburg" on Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Ethan Allen Gallery in Cherry Hill. Four rooms were decorated by club members. The decorations were sold, and it was a financial success for the club.

In 1977 our club entered the Philadelphia Flower Show for the first time. They won second place in the Room and Table Class. Club's entry was titled "Join the Family". It was a music room furnished in the Williamsburg Period.

August 16th Elvis Presley dies in Graceland at 42

In 1978 the President was Mrs. Karen Tosh. The November Luncheon was held at the Executive Motor Lodge. The theme was "Holiday Potpourri". Tickets were \$6.75 and tree decorations were sold. A raffle and door prizes was held.

Ethan Allen sponsored a tree decorating contest this year and our club along with other area clubs participated. Winning the contest was dependent upon the number of votes each club received. Our tree was decorated in the Williamsburg manner. Our club won a first place prize of \$150.00.

In 1978 our club started a year's term in preparation for joining the Federation of Garden Clubs.

A Grounds Beautification Recognition program was started this year with an award going each month to a Mount Laurel home owner. This became an annual project and lasted for many years.

Our club participated in a spring flower show held at the First National Bank, in Burlington, called "A May Bank of Flowers". The show was a three day standard judged show with area clubs participating. The show had three general categories: Artistic, Educational and Horticultural Specimens. One of our members won "Best of Show" and other members of our club won numerous ribbons.

May 26 Resorts International, first legal casino in the eastern United States opens in Atlantic City.

Mrs. Karen Tosh was President again in 1979. The November Luncheon was called "Creative Tables" and held again at the Executive Motor Lodge. Tickets cost \$9.50, with door prizes and hand crafted items for sale.

Our club again participated in the Ethan Allen's tree decorating contest and for the second year our club won the first place prize of \$150.00.

June 6th McDonald's introduces the Happy Meal.

In 1980 President was Mrs. Elayne Golden. The November Luncheon was held at Benihana of Tokyo, Cherry Hill, and featured a demonstration of Origami with a Fashion Show. Bazaar items were for sale, and tickets cost \$9.50.

Once again Ethan Allen's tree decorating contest was held and for the third year our club won the first place prize of \$150.00.

May 1980 Mount St. Helen's erupts in Washington killing 57 and causing the United States billions in damage.

In 1981 our club held a pressed flower workshop in which the members decorated the cover of their own yearbook.

The President was Mrs. Peggy Symrski. The November Luncheon was held at Ramblewood Country Club. Tickets were \$8.00. Bazaar items were for sale.

There was a combined meeting with the Marlton Garden Club at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. The speaker was Jeanette Johnson and the topic was Historical Design and Heirloom Silver.

July 29th was the wedding of Charles, Prince of Wales, and Lady Diana Spencer at St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

In 1982 the President was Mrs. Nancy Speiser.

On September 11th at the Moorestown Horse Show and Country Fair the club won first prize for a garland that was made by the inactive members. This garland was placed around the neck of the winner in the Western Pleasure Horse Championship Class.

The November Luncheon was held at the Ramblewood Country Club. Tickets were \$10.00. For sale again were hand made articles, along with door prizes.

For the first time on December 12th our club participated in the decorating of Smithville Mansion. The theme was titled "A Victorian Christmas-Circa 1900". The club decorated a 30 foot x 15 foot double parlor and titled the room "Christmas and Everything More". A floor-to-ceiling Christmas tree was adorned with 470 ornaments that club members made from household materials just like the kind Victorians would have used to make their ornaments. Mantels were decorated and table arrangements adorned the room.

October 1982 EPCOT Center opens in Orlando, Florida – Walt Disney World.

In 1983 the President was Mrs. Rose Mary Gittins.

The first meeting they again held a pressed flower workshop where members decorated their yearbook cover.

The November Luncheon was held at the Ramblewood Country Club. The speaker was Mrs. Susan Moss an inactive member of the club at that time. The theme was "Christmas Plain and Fancy". A bazaar was held afterward.

February 29th Final episode of MASH airs. Most watched television broadcast in American History, setting a new record

June 18th Sally Ride becomes the first American woman in space aboard Space Shuttle Challenger on the STS-7 mission.