Arboretum Annual Report, 1997

Connecticut College

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The Connecticut College Arboretum is owned by Connecticut College and operated for the benefit of the College and the community. The Arboretum functions in support of the College’s mission by helping to prepare men and women for a lifetime of learning about and interacting with the natural world. The Mission of the Connecticut College Arboretum is:

TEACHING - To provide an outdoor laboratory for use by faculty and students in Botany, Zoology, Biology, Environmental Studies and other departments. In both teaching and research the Arboretum is a unique and valuable academic resource and support facility.

RESEARCH - To support and conduct research in a broad range of subjects including ecology, field biology, conservation and natural history. Arboretum research emphasizes long-term studies.

CONSERVATION - To provide stewardship of College lands by protecting, sustaining and enhancing biological diversity of large tracts of open-space. The Arboretum also provides leadership statewide and beyond in conservation matters.

COLLECTIONS - To maintain, develop and interpret well-documented plant collections for teaching, research, public education and enjoyment.

RECREATION - To provide a place where people from the College and the community may enjoy passive recreation and where they may come to learn, reflect and renew themselves through contact with the natural world. The Arboretum enhances the quality of life both for the College and the citizens of southeastern Connecticut.

PUBLIC EDUCATION - To provide programs and publications about conservation, horticulture, gardening, botany and natural history which enhance people’s understanding of the natural world and foster an understanding of the Arboretum’s mission.
FROM THE DIRECTOR

June 20, 1999

IT HAS BEEN TWO YEARS since I last wrote a letter as a fore­word to an Arboretum Annual Report, and much has happened during that time. In this synopsis of 1997, you will be reminded of many exciting developments, including the dedication of a new collection of Hollies in memory of Parthenia Johnson, and an active year of educational programs.

This was also the time that the College engaged a master planning consulting team to help us consider the best uses of the land, landscape and buildings during the next ten or fifteen years. A critical component of the plan will be the integration of the “Campus as Arboretum” concept into the vision for our future. The upcoming 1998 annual report will contain more details on the progress of the plan.

The reason for the delay in circulating this report is that Bill Niering and I were appointed directors of the college’s Center for Conservation Biology and Environmental Studies (CCBES), an interdisciplinary program of faculty from eight or nine different departments. Established in 1993, it is a direct outgrowth of the work of Dick Goodwin, Bill Niering, Bob Askins and others in the areas of ecological research and environmental teaching. The college administration realized that we had an academic and operational strength in environmental studies unique among our peer liberal arts institutions. In July 1997 Bill and I were asked to raise the visibility and activity level of the Center, which took significant amounts of our time.

As you can see from this document, the Arboretum continued to function and prosper thanks to the dedication of our excellent staff. The Center and the Arboretum are both reflections of the same vision concerning the need to help people learn about and live in a sustainable relationship with the natural world. This is a vision I know you share, and I thank you for your continued support of our efforts.

Sincerely,

Glenn D. Dreyer, Director
SALT - is a new movement, originating at Connecticut College, aimed at reversing the lawn mania in America by restoring home and commercial grounds to more harmonious, productive ecologically sound naturalistic landscapes. It is an outgrowth of ideas that Dr. William Niering has been experimenting with and teaching about for many years. Through information brochures and fact sheets the Arboretum is doing its part to promote a healthier, more diverse environment.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

THE ANNUAL JANUARY CONFERENCE FOR PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS, “Capturing Nature’s Visual Patterns in Landscape Design,” was keynoted by Sara Stein, author of the acclaimed “Noah’s Garden: Restoring the Ecology of our Own Backyards.” A complementary mix of ecologists (Dr. Mark McDonnell ’74), designers (Colston Burrell), horticulturists (Dr. Richard Lighty), and a painter (Henry Dean) were among the outstanding presenters. Spring educational program highlights included “The Family and the Japanese Garden,” by Reiko Kurosawa, MA’97; “Brown, Gold and Green Tea” with Prof. Sally Taylor; “Sacred Mountains - Culture and Conservation” by Dr. Ed. Bernbaum, and workshops on pruning, spring garden cleanups, building stone walls, and growing flowering trees. During summer we visited the public gardens at Wave Hill and the Cloisters, both in NYC. Dr. Niering presented a lecture on environmentally friendly home lawns at our annual members’ & friends’ night, and we visited the Arboretum for bird and plant walks. Summer is also the time for Shakespeare in the Arbo, and 1,900 people attended multiple Flock Theater performances of “The Taming of the Shrew” and “Macbeth”.

During autumn we toured four home landscapes that exemplify the SALT (Smaller American Lawns Today) philosophy, and conducted nature photography, autumn foliage, tree identification and geology walks and workshops. There were also two major lectures. “Travels in China: A Plantsman’s Paradise” by noted English horticulturist Roy Lancaster was presented as part of the dedication ceremonies for the Johnson Holly Collection. Our own Dr. Richard Goodwin presented a long range history of Arboretum land in his talk “Between the Ice Age and the 21st Century.” A total of 937 individuals attended Arboretum educational programs in 1997.

The “Arbo Project” is a student designed and operated children’s environmental education program that uses the Arboretum as a living classroom. Carey Trube ’97 spent three years with the Project and provided excellent leadership in her senior year. During Spring 1997 nine tours, serving 213 children mostly in grades three to five, were provided by the following students: Rich Lynch ’99, Sara Scott ’99, Josie Shain ’97, Sarah Jackson ’99, Tammy Brandt ’97, Emily Cook ’97, Katy Abrahams ’98, and Maya Falk ’98, who became coordinator for 1997-98.
TEACHING & RESEARCH

IN ADDITION TO A MULTITUDE OF BOTANY COURSES THAT REGULARLY USE THE ARBORETUM, Zoology Professor Robert Askins also made extensive use of our facility for his classes. In Ornithology, all 14 students did field projects in the Arboretum in which they monitored seasonal changes in bird populations and focused on the behavior of particular bird species. The 28 students in Animal Ecology had two outdoor lab sessions, and most did their semester-long field research projects in the Arboretum. Prof. Askins’ Animal Behavior course featured a night-time field trip to the Arboretum Pond.

Erin Largay ’99, served as the summer Arboretum research fellow and worked on a number of projects, including resurveying for hemlock woolly adelgid insect damage in the Bolleswood Natural Area. She also established a study on one of our neighbor’s pastures to examine the effect of sheep grazing on herbaceous and woody growth.

Emily Hoffhine ’97 continued work initiated by Arboretum staff at Moore Woods, a preserve in Westerly, RI. This year Emily looked in detail at the vegetation of grazed and ungrazed portions of a wetland system.

The controlled burning plots, established in the Matthies and Avery tracts by Bill Niering and Dick Goodwin in 1968, are now being managed primarily as demonstration areas. Both field and forest sites were burned this spring, and Holly Johnson ’97, worked with Bill Niering and Glenn Dreyer in compiling long-term data from these experiments.

Sarah Gosslee ’92, a Ph.D. candidate in ecology at Duke University used long term vegetation sampling data from the Arboretum’s Bolleswood Natural Area as the basis of her dissertation. She visited during summer 1997 to resample many of the plots and find additional information.

Scott Williams, an MA candidate in the Botany Department remapped tidal marsh vegetation at Mamacoke and undertook analysis of sampling data first collected in 1957. He worked with Pam Hine, Bill Niering, and Scott Warren.

Professor Askins, Wendy Dreyer and Mary Dowdell completed bird censuses in two study sites within the Bolleswood Natural Area.
PUBLICATIONS


PLANT COLLECTIONS

THE PARTHENIA GRIER JOHNSON MEMORIAL HOLLY COLLECTION was officially dedicated on October 18, 1997. The new collection forms a long, deep border along the southern edge of the Caroline Black Garden. Designed by Arboretum Horticulturist Jeff Smith, it features 36 taxa in the genus Ilex, plus a variety of groundcovers, flowering shrubs and small trees. The collection labeled with common and scientific plant names, includes a stone wall with sitting area and is framed by a wooden privacy fence to the rear. The late Mrs. Johnson was the mother of Ashley Hanson, a long time employee of the College’s library and information services departments. She was the wife of Dr. Francis Johnson, Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies and former Dean of the Faculty. The Arboretum is very grateful to Mrs. Johnson’s family for supporting this collection and for creating an endowment to maintain it in perpetuity.

THE JOHNSON HOLLY COLLECTION INITIAL PLANTING LIST

HOLLIES

Ilex aquifolium 'Sadies Deluxe'
Ilex aquifolium 'San Gabriel'
Ilex aquifolium 'Silver Queen'
Ilex aquifolium 'Vanegata'
Ilex aquifolium 'San Jose'
Ilex cornuta 'O'Spring'
Ilex crenata 'Beehive'
Ilex crenata 'Stokes'
Ilex crenata 'Convexa'
Ilex crenata 'Conn College ?'
Ilex crenata 'Dwarf Pagoda'
Ilex crenata 'Golden Gem'
Ilex crenata 'Midas Touch'
Ilex crenata 'Sky Pencil'
Ilex decidua 'Warren's Red'
Ilex glabra 'Compacta'
Ilex glabra 'Ivory Queen'
Ilex opaca 'Canary'
Ilex opaca 'John Wister'
Ilex opaca 'Maryland Dwarf'
Ilex pedunculosa
Ilex serrata 'Bonfire'
Ilex verticillata
Ilex verticillata 'Kennebago'
Ilex verticillata 'Red Sprite'
Ilex x 'Adonis'
Ilex x 'Nellie R. Stevens'
Ilex x 'Rock Garden'
Ilex x 'Sparkleberry'
Ilex x 'Venus'
Ilex x altaclarensis 'Golden King'
Ilex x attenuata 'Bienville Gold'
Ilex x meserveae 'Blue Prince'
Ilex x meserveae 'Blue Princess'
Ilex x meserveae 'China Girl'
Ilex x meserveae 'Golden Girl'

COMPANION PLANTS

Cercis canadensis 'Forest Pansy'
Gaylussacia brachycera
Leiophyllum buxifolium
Magnolia stellata
Mahonia aquifolium
Malus hupehensis
Osmanthus heterophyllum 'Goshiki'
Paxistima canbyi
Rhododendron 'Coral Bells'
Rhododendron 'Gumbo White'
Rhododendron 'Hilda Niblett'
Rhododendron 'Nancy of Robin Hill'
Rhododendron 'Rosebud'
Rhododendron yedoense var. poukhanense
Vaccinium vitis-idaea subsp. minus
Vinca minor
- Vinca minor 'Alba'
- Vinca minor 'Bowlesii'
- Vinca minor 'Ralph Shugert'
The renovation of the Laurel Walk was completed during the summer of 1997 with the removal of the steps on the upper portion of the slope. These were rarely used due to uncomfortable spacing, very difficult to trim around, and finally deemed unnecessary. The granite has been stockpiled for use in future Arboretum Projects.

Spring planting continued in the Edgerton and Stengel Wildflower Garden with 350 new small plants added. Volunteers provided weeding and mulching, so necessary in the early stages of any garden.

**ADDITIONS TO THE PLANT COLLECTIONS**

- Albizia julibrissin
- Betula ermanii
- Chionanthus retusus
- Cornus alternifolia
- Fothergilla major
- Ilex x meserveae
- Itea virginica

**1997 MEMORIALS**

- *Cornus rutgan 'Aurora'* – in memory of deceased classmates, 1947
- *Cornus rutgan 'Aurora'* – class of 1972, in memory of Concetta Vigneri Gretz
- *Cornus rutgan 'Stellar Pink'* – in honor of class of 1997 parents and students
- *Ilex x aquipernyi 'San Jose'* – in honor of Holy C. Doyle ‘97
- *Liquidambar styraciflua 'Rotundiloba'* – gift of Meskwaka Tree Project
- *Ulmus carpinifolia 'Pioneer'* – in honor of Chaplain Steve Schmidt
- *Bench* – in honor of Russell and Florence Thackston’s 50th Wedding Anniversary

**CAMPUS LAND PLANNING**

The Campus Land Planning and Use Committee is charged with overseeing land planning, and developing policies for wise land use. It is responsible to the Buildings and Grounds Committee of the Board of Trustees, and reports through the Finance Office. Co-chaired by Glenn Dreyer and Rayanne Chambers, Director of Administration, the committee includes Prof. Dan Abrams, Prof. Janice Stockard, Prof. Scott Warren, and Prof. Ann Parmenter; staff members Steve George, Chris Penniman, Jim Norton, and Jim Luce; and students Chris Hering, Steve Van Dyke and Amy Moulton. The main issues that the committee addressed were planning for a new college main entrance driveway and preparing for a campus master plan.

The main entrance driveway redesign began in 1996 and continued this year. This was the first major outdoor construction initiative that used the concept of the Campus as Arboretum as a major design theme. The location chosen for the new driveway was a mirror image of the curve of the original. This allowed us to use the existing opening to Mohegan Avenue (Rt. 32), avoid damage to a very large tulip tree, and to make entering the driveway much safer
for southbound traffic. The gatehouse was relocated to the center of the drive directly east of the middle of Fanning Hall in order to service traffic arriving and leaving the campus. The Desiderato Memorial Garden was moved from this spot to a nearby location south of the gatehouse. Landscape Architect Alice Eckerson '82 was commissioned to create the landscape plan, including plantings, sidewalks, and a massive granite retaining wall around the tulip tree.

Preparation for a comprehensive campus master plan to address land and building utilization issues got well underway thanks to the able leadership of Jim Norton, Physical Plant Director. By the end of the year the master planning subcommittee had reviewed the last master plan (1986), defined the scope and timing of the project, sent out a request for proposals to qualified planning consultants, selected five consulting teams for interviews and recommended one team to the Board’s Buildings and Grounds Committee.

The Ad Astra Terrace, located at the summit of the College Green, honors donors who have made lifetime commitments of $1 million or more to Connecticut College. Thompson and Rose Architects of Cambridge, MA designed it from an original concept by President Gaudiani. The Terrace was dedicated during Reunion 1997 in memory of Eleanor Farr Eckert from Susan Eckert Lynch '62. It consists of an oval, pink granite patio with matching polished granite benches facing the view of New London and the Sound. The names of the donors are engraved on the back of the curving benches, and a sundial/fountain by Art Professor David Smalley graces the patio. It immediately became a favorite spot for undergrads to sun and professors to stage outdoor lectures.

A sculpture by artist Sol LeWitt, titled Skyline, was constructed south of Freeman House during fall 1997. LeWitt is a world-renowned sculptor who donated the design of the piece. It was built of cinder blocks by craftsmen employed on the North Dormitory Complex renovation.

**STAFF & ASSOCIATES**

BEGINNING IN FALL 1997, WILLIAM NIERING BECAME Director and Glenn Dreyer Executive Director of the College’s Center for Conservation Biology and Environmental Studies. Established in 1993, the Center is an interdisciplinary program of faculty and students in the liberal arts interested in contemporary environmental issues.

In April Glenn Dreyer was honored for 15 years of service to the College. Glenn continued to serve on the boards of the Science Center of Eastern Connecticut, Friends of Harkness Memorial State Park and Aton Forest.

Jens Hilek '99, Arboretum Intern, served through June when Amanda Orsted '97 replaced him. Jens’ many accomplishments were described in the 1996 annual report. Amanda worked primarily on re-inventorying the
Campus tree collection. Summer 1997 Arboretum workers were Erin Juhl ’98, Meghan Flynn ’00, Yvonne Rinehart ’99.

ARBORETUM STUDENT WORKERS

SPRING 1997

Keith Bowman ’99
Rebecca Gendreau ’98
Jonna Grimsby ’98
Chris Lawless ’97
Kent Ng ’99
Jake Marin ’98
Tanja Sandberg-Diment ’97

Alison Fiser ’00
David Greenblatt ’97
Erin Juhl ’99
Jesse Locantore ’98
Dave Norris ’98
Todd Twigg

FALL 1997

Shannon Anderson ’98
Karen Belley
Meghan Flynn ’00
Erin Juhl ’98
Oluseun Oyesiku ’98
Todd Twigg

Alison Fiser ’00
Jessica Doe ’98
Rebecca Gendreau ’98
Agnes Orlowski ’98
Yvonne Rinehart ’98

VOLUNTEERS & MEMBERS

OUR SECOND ARBORETUM DOCENT TRAINING CLASS graduated in May, bringing the total number of tour guides to 30. Approximately 300 people participated in the free Saturday afternoon tours and a number of private tours.

A new volunteer program called “Hort Helpers” was initiated in the summer of 1997. This group exists to assist our staff with a variety of gardening tasks. Twenty-three people attended three training sessions and signed up to work in variety of locations including the Caroline Black Garden, the greenhouse and the wildflower garden.

Volunteers also help out with a variety of functions, including the annual plant sale, decorating the President’s residence for the winter holidays, and office tasks.

A big “thank-you” is due to Prides Corner Farms Nursery, for allowing our members a day of plant buying at wholesale prices.

All of our volunteers have earned our thanks and respect, but in 1997 two especially dedicated individuals received special recognition:

Ashley Hanson—served on a variety of Arboretum Committees, was the first docent to give a tour, led twice as many tours as any other docent, regularly appeared on
weekend workdays, taught an Arbo. workshop, greeted people at our plant sales and generally helped out whenever asked.

Dick Conway—was a faithful volunteer before we had any formal programs, served on many committees, helped to craft our plant name labels, pitched in on bulk mailing projects, worked all day at the plant sales and was always available when we had a need.

THANK YOU, DORIS E. BARTON '26

Doris, a botany major, passed away in January, 1996 and left a $25,000 bequest to the Connecticut College Arboretum. The following is an excerpt from a letter written about Doris by her nephew, Robert E. Barton to Ann C. Wheeler '34, correspondent for the classes of 1919-1927.

"Possibly because her father was a professional gardener and landscaper (he was head gardener on the Vanderbilt estate in Hyde Park, NY), she had an abiding interest in plants and called most of them by their Latin names. Well into her late 80s she made an effort to maintain her roe garden; I'd go over to help her and she would wade right in, tearing out poison ivy with her bare hands (it never seemed to bother her). Ultimately the weeds got ahead of her, but she persisted in tending things indoors: African violets, cacti, etc."

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

Gregory Anderson  
David Arnold  
Robert Askins  
Richard Berman  
Elaine Berman  
Melinda Blum  
Pat Bolles  
Nancy Burrows  
Virginia Butler  
Dick Conway  
Steve Carroll  
Margaret Crowther  
Samayla Deutch  
Cornelia Dickinson  
Vita Dodson  
Mary Dowdell  
Carolyn Driscoll  
Wendy Dreyer  
Kathy Ellis  
Sally Edmonstone  
Emily Fisher  
Allison Flynn  
Joan Flynn  
Donna Fowler  
Gerry Fuller  
Alan Gauthier  
Dick Goodwin  
Greg Haines  
Kari Hammen  
Ashley Hanson  
Jan Hine  
Mary Howard  

Alby Johnson  
Erin Jewel '98  
Barbara Kashanski  
Ken Kraus  
Bob Kuchta  
Lynn Leonard  
Linda Lillie  
Susan Lindberg  
Annie Lott  
Jim Luce  
Martie MacLaren  
Morgan MacLaren  
Edméé McIntosh  
Sandy Morse  
Bill Niering  
Christy O'Neill  
Mary O'Sullivan  
Nancy Patenaude  
Betty Pinson  
Nancy Phillips  
Jim Pisarczyk  
Yvonne Rhinehart '98  
Richard Schneller  
Arlene Scott  
Fred Seidel  
Jeanne Shelburne  
Bob Sherman  
Lisa Sullivan  
Sally Taylor  
Sheila Wertheimer  
Becky Williams

ARBORETUM ASSOCIATION MEMBERS, 1997

We gratefully acknowledge the financial contributions made by the following individuals during 1997 (11/96 - 11/97). We strive to accurately maintain our records and appreciate any corrections.

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McGeorge, William B.
McGuire, James C.
McIntosh, Edmee'
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McKeon, Robert Dr. & Mrs.
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Miles, Lynn W.
Moore, Christina
Morse, Sandra
Moulton, Evelyn
Moulton, Martha J.
Myers, Roberts
Neary, Mary
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Newington Garden Club
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Richards, Betty
Richards, Sarah W.
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The Arboretum received the New England Wildflower Society 1997 Education Award. The Society cited the Arboretum's "exceptional programs for native plant education for the public."...its "extensive native plantings that...showcase the beauty and horticultural potential" of these plants. The award was accepted by Arboretum Program Coordinator Katherine Garvin during the Society's annual meeting at their Framingham, Massachusetts headquarters.
ARBRETUM ANNUAL REPORT, 1997

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Katherine T. (Dame) Garvin ’90, Program Coordinator
Craig O. Vine, Horticultural Assistant
Jens Hilke ’96, Arboretum Intern (to 6/97)

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Paul E. Fell, Research Associate
Pamela G. Hine MA ’84, Research Associate
Richard Orson MA ’83, Research Associate
R. Scott Warren, Research Associate
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