



The Trillium

Piedmont Chapter
North American Rock Garden Society
Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh, NC
www.facebook.com/piedmontchapterNARGS

My Journey as a Gardener

by Hans Hansen

I began down the path of becoming a lifelong gardener at a young age; my parents were dairy farmers and had a large vegetable garden with a few rows of iris, peonies, tiger lilies, and a few other perennials on the end rows, which were mostly pass-along plants from neighbors and relatives. I do know the peonies were planted in 1968 and are still going strong.




The first photographs of me in the garden were around the age of 3 planting onions in a furrow my dad made using a hoe. He handed me a stick roughly 4" long and told me to use it as a template planting

an onion bulb that far apart. I remember my mom taking me to garden clubs and getting to know the other gardeners in the area – the good gardeners always grew perennials and had extra to share.

When I was in elementary school my sister and I took swimming lessons in the summer and would walk from the school across town to my grandparents where we were picked up and taken back to the farm. I seemed to always be absent from the other kids walking down the sidewalk:





when my folks asked where I had been and why it took longer than everyone else I replied, “I always walk in the alleys because that’s where all the gardens are.”

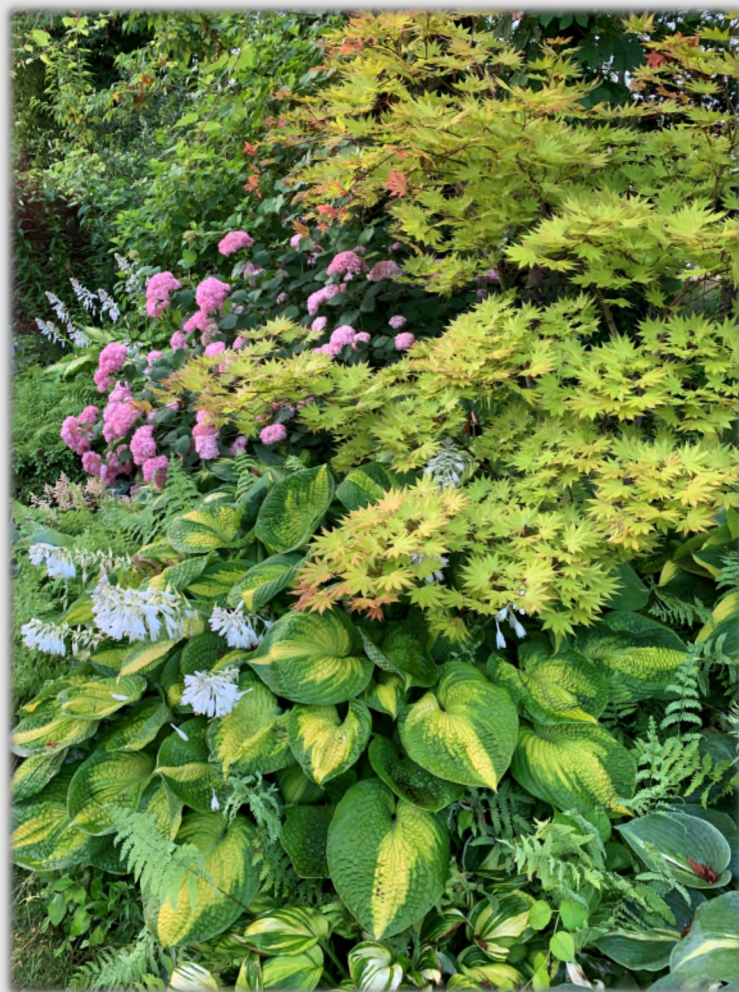


June) followed by ‘American Sweetheart’ (from ‘Sea Thunder’). Probably my favorites from my breeding program at that time were ‘Prairie Sky’ and ‘Hosta ‘Neptune’.

In 2009 I moved to Michigan and began working at Walters Gardens Nursery as Director of New Plant Development. Walters Gardens is a 74-year-old nursery and is America’s leading wholesale producer of bare-root perennials, supplying both field grown bare root plants as well as cellulated young plants throughout the United States and Canada. Currently I have been working with 70 genera of perennials ranging from Monarda, Phlox, Baptisia, Agapanthus, Sedum, Hostas, Heuchera and Hibiscus. Some notable introduction from this time period include Hosta ‘Diamond Lake’, Monarda ‘Electric Neon Pink’, Phlox

I began collecting plants in elementary school – bearded iris were my first, but Liliaceae and hostas soon followed. I began hybridizing Asiatic Lilies when I was in middle school focusing on the brush-mark pattern; Lilies remain my passion and I work with them to this day.

After high school I went to college for Horticulture, my first job was managing the tissue culture lab at Shady Oaks Nursery in Waseca, Minnesota. I lived in a 5-acre wooded lot and grew thousands of hostas, several hundred herbaceous plants, trees, and intersectional peonies, along with dwarf conifers, wildflowers, and assorted perennials. It was there I began breeding hostas and working on converting variegated hostas from diploid to tetraploids. My first tetraploid conversion was Hosta ‘Touch of Class’ (from





'Fashionably Early Princess', Baptisia 'Lemon Meringue', Agapanthus 'Galaxy White', Heuchera 'Lemon Love', and Hibiscus 'Berry Awesome'.

Moving from a 5-acre wooded lot in zone 4/5 to a mostly sunny city lot in zone 6a was a huge adjustment, I have learned to be incredibly creative with plant selection and placement. My garden is designed to be a year-round garden with plants of interest throughout the season. The perennial borders are layered with conifers, shrubs, bulbs and perennials; the island beds and rock gardens hold the more choice smaller plants. I recently began collecting miniature water lilies and lotus – growing them both in containers on my patio as well as in pots sunk into the garden.

My talk “Breeding Better Perennials from a Gardener’s Perspective” will be a walk through the process from making the cross, trialing, selecting, evaluating, and introducing the plants. I will also talk about plant breeders and their introductions that changed how we garden and why are such significant contributions to the world of horticulture. Favorite

plants and the people behind them and what makes them special will give you a new appreciation for the plants in your garden. ✨

All photos by Hans Hansen.





Gardens of the British Isles – How I Became a Garden Traveler

By David White

My wife, Carolyn, and I have spent a significant part of the past 20 years visiting gardens in the U.S. and overseas. This past May and June, we spent 25 days in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Locations that we visited (and associated internet sites) include:

England

RHS Garden, Wisley (www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley)

Nymans Garden (www.nationaltrust.org.uk/nymans)

Sussex Prairie Garden (www.sussexprairies.co.uk)

Hillier Garden (www.hants.gov.uk/thingstodo/hilliergardens)



Rock Garden of Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG) - Wisley, England

Scotland

RBG Edinburgh (www.rbge.org.uk)

Branklyn Garden (www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/branklyn-garden)

Explorer's Garden (www.explorersgarden.com)

Ian Young's backyard (none)

Wales

Bodnant Garden (www.nationaltrust.org.uk/bodnant-garden)

Dyffryn Fernant Garden (www.dyffrynfernant.co.uk)

Ireland

The Burren (www.burrennationalpark.ie/gallery-wildlife/flora/)

Mount Usher (www.mountushergardens.ie)


Hunting Brook Garden (www.huntingbrook.com)

At our October chapter meeting, I'll show pictures and talk about some of these gardens and natural areas. As teasers, below are four pictures taken during the trip. I will also show pictures taken by Amelia Lane during the NARGS-sponsored tour of public and private rock garden in Scotland.



Crevice Garden at Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG) - Edinburgh, Scotland

Rather than using this space to provide a detailed overview of my presentation, I'd like to provide a quick summary of how I became a garden traveler and why I enjoy doing it. I grew up enjoying being outdoors, but didn't get into gardening until I was roughly 35. From 35 to 50, gardening was a weekend activity that started with planting a perennial bed in our back yard in Chapel Hill. During this period, I discovered that gardening was very therapeutic and I became an 'invasive gardener' who planted perennials in my neighbors' yards and pruned their shrubs and trees (with their permission, of course).



In 1998, we decided to move from Chapel Hill to a new home in southern Durham and, for the first time in my life, I went on a garden tour (actually two). One of the gardens visited was Nancy Goodwin's Montrose in Hillsborough. After we moved to Durham, a neighbor invited me to a meeting of the Piedmont Chapter of NARGS, at which Nancy was the speaker. These events opened my eyes to the fact that gardening is something that can be shared with other gardeners.

Once we were reasonably settled in Durham, Carolyn and I started traveling overseas. Our first trip included a visit to Keukenhof Garden in the Netherlands to see tulips in bloom. A couple of years later, we took a small-ship cruise around New Zealand that included a group from the American Horticultural Society that was visiting gardens. I befriended one of the men on the AHS tour and joined the group on their tour of gardens near Christchurch. Subsequently, Carolyn and I went on a JCRA-sponsored trip to Chanticleer, Mt. Cuba, and several other nearby gardens and I became aware of the Garden Conservancy and its Open Gardens program. These travels led to my realization that I enjoyed seeing other people's gardens and that gardeners were generally very friendly and easy to talk to.



Dyffern Fernant Garden in Wales

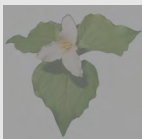
Carolyn retired from employment with the N.C. Department of Public Instruction in 2007 and received a copy of '1,000 Places to See Before You Die' as a retirement gift. Soon thereafter, I found '1001 Gardens You Must See Before You Die' while browsing in a local bookstore. Armed with these two books and my discovery of Trip Advisor (TA), Cruise Critic (CC), and GardenVisit.com, I started to dream about where to go and what gardens I wanted to see. Reflecting my growing interest in gardens and travels, I adopted the handle of 'NC Garden Traveler' on TA and CC.



**Ireland: *Ophrys apifera*
(bee orchid) in the Burren**

During the same time period, Tom Harville talked me into becoming a member of the Piedmont Chapter board and a couple of years later twisted my arm to become the chapter chair. To be the chapter chair, I needed to join NARGS and was supposed to attend their Annual General Meeting (AGM). Thanks in part to Bobby Ward's introductions, I enjoyed the AGMs and the chance to explore the native flora in various parts of the U.S. and Canada. Tom Harville also contributed to my travels by talking Carolyn into joining the North Carolina Native Plant Society and going on its field trips.

Since 2007, we have generally taken one international trip each year. Most of the trips have included visits to as many landscaped gardens and native plant areas as possible. These have ranged from private gardens (Ian Young's backyard in Scotland is the most recent example) to public parks and gardens to native plant habitats. Some are well known (such as Sissinghurst and Giverny) and some well



off the beaten path (such as Jac Thijssse Park on the south side of Amsterdam). Some simply blow you away (such as West Coast National Park in South Africa and the Western Australia Botanic Park in Perth, Australia).

We have seen gardens on 6 of the 7 continents and on multiple islands. Since 2000, we have visited more than 60 counties and 180 gardens and native plant habitats around the world. These numbers include 19 states and more than 40 gardens or native plant locations in the U.S. I look forward to sharing some of my photos and stories from our recent trip to the U.K. and Ireland. 🌿

Photos by David White

Green Swamp Day Trip!

On Sunday, October 13 (rain date October 20) Piedmont Chapter members will visit the extraordinary nature preserve, Green Swamp, home to beautiful, rare and endangered carnivorous plants. The *Sarracenia*, or pitcher plants, should be blooming and looking their best. We will be guided by chapter members Tim Alderton, Charlie Kidder, and Zac Hill. Details to be announced at the September meeting, or contact chapter chair, Cyndy Cromwell.

cacromwell2000@yahoo.com. For a preview of the area we will be visiting, google the Green Swamp or use <http://www.wildlifesouth.com/Locations/NorthCarolina/GreenSwamp.html#>

The cell coverage can be spotty down east, so printed directions may be a good backup for phone directions. Printed directions are on page 8. and will be available at the September meeting. 🌿



Photo by David White

Gentiana autumnalis



Photo by David White

Sarracenia flava



Photo by David White

Sarracenia purpurea



The Chapter Offers Unique Bulbs to Members!

We have ordered 6 different small bulbs from Van Engelen's Inc. wholesale flower bulbs. A total of 30 bulbs, they will be in packages of 5 in each of the 6 different bulbs. The cost will be \$13 a bag for 30 bulbs or 2 bags for \$25. Bulbs will arrive in the fall. If you pre-order at the Sept.28 meeting, you can pick them up at the October 19th meeting. Here are the bulbs that will be available.

1. *Crocus minimus* 'Spring Beauty': Spring Beauty stands about 3" tall with graceful six-petaled pale lilac flowers with variable grape-purple flames, that open and close on sunny days, and grass-like foliage with narrow, median silvery stripes. It has a fibrous tunic. Deer-resistant, they naturalize readily in well-draining soil and in full to partial sunlight.
2. *Iris reticulata* 'Pixie': This sultry beauty has rich blackish-blue standards and falls with a yellow stripe and white blotches on the falls. 4 " tall. Early April. Plant 4" deep and 4" to 5" apart.
3. *Tulip clusiana* 'Lady Jane': This candy-cane hybrid has a rosy-red exterior with ivory-white petal margins. The interior is ivory-white with a chrome-yellow base and its foliage is fern-green with phlox-pink edges. April. 12" tall.
4. *Tulip cretica* 'Hilde': A selection of *Tulipa cretica*, circa 1853, this dainty charmer is so very beautiful yet tough enough to withstand the rocky mountains of Crete from whence it hails. Producing up to three star-shaped flowers per stem, Hilde has a whisper-pink interior with a golden-yellow heart and a pale pink exterior accented with darker purple-pink striations. Late April/May. 6" to 7" tall.
5. *Narcissus* 'Altruist': This award-winning British hybrid has a 3" coppery golden-orange perianth and a shallow, bowl-shaped crimson-orange cup. cm. April. 14" to 18" tall.
6. *Narcissus bulbocodium* 'White Petticoat': It is the largest, pure white form of *N. bulbocodium* conspicuous with hoop petticoat-shaped, glistening white flowers, a star-shaped white perianth of narrow petals and grass-like foliage. April. 6" to 8" tall. ❧



Photo by Tim Alderton

Crocus minimus
'Spring Beauty'



Photo by Tim Alderton

Narcissus bulbocodium



Photo by Tim Alderton

Tulip cretica 'Hilde'



Photo by Tim Alderton

Iris reticulata 'Pixie'



Photo by Tim Alderton

Tulip clusiana
'Lady Jane'



From John Scheepers online catalog

Narcissus 'Altruist'



Piedmont NARGS Speakers Fall 2019/Spring 2020

September 28, 2019

Hans Hansen

Director, New Plant Development
Walters Gardens, Zeeland, Mich.

**“Breeding Better Perennials from a
Gardener’s Perspective”**

October 19, 2019

David White

Durham, N.C.

“Gardening Adventures in Great Britain and Ireland”

November 2, 2019 (*Rms 107 & 109 only*)

Tim Alderton

Research Technician, JC Raulston Arboretum
Raleigh, N.C.

**“The Wildflowers of Mount St. Helens
and Mount Rainier”**

January 18, 2020

John Lonsdale

Edgewood Gardens
Exton, Penna.

“Woodland Treasures”

February 8, 2020

Will Hembree

Raleigh, N.C.

**“From Georgia to Maine:
Wildflowers of the Appalachian Trail”**

March 21, 2020

Todd Boland

St. John’s, Newfoundland
NARGS Traveling Speaker

“Spring Alpines of the Spanish Pyrenees”

April 18, 2020

Cyndy Cromwell, Nancy Doubrava, David White
“NARGS Fall-Bulbs-of-Greece Tour”

Directions to the Green Swamp Preserve

673 Green Swamp Rd NW, Supply, NC 28462

From the JC Raulston Arboretum:

Get on I-440 W, then take exit 1 for I-40 E/US-64 E
toward Benson 0.9 mi

Keep left at the fork and merge onto I-40 E 8.3 mi

Keep right at the fork to stay on I-40 E, follow signs
for Benson/Wilmington

115 mi

Take exit 416A-416B for US 17 S toward Myrtle
Beach 1.0 mi

Merge onto I-140 W 18.7 mi

Use the right 2 lanes to take the S 17 exit 0.3 mi

Continue on US-17 S. Drive to NC-211 in Lockwoods
Folly 24 min (23.3 mi)

Merge onto US-17 S 3.6 mi

Continue straight to stay on US-17 S

Pass by Hardee’s (on the right in 13.8 mi) 13.9 mi

Turn right onto NC-211

Destination will be on the right 5.8 mi

Save the Date

On Saturday October 5, 2019, the Vance/
Warren Extension Master Gardener Volunteers will
partner with Preservation Warrenton to host a day of
exploration and learning in historic Warrenton. Ac-
tivities will include a guided one-hour walking tour of
Historic Downtown Warrenton, lunch (on your own)
at one of Warrenton’s wonderful restaurants and the
afternoon with Brie Arthur.

Brie is a nationally known speaker and author
of two books. Brie has fine-tuned her signature
design technique of Foodscaping, a sustainable
landscape practice that embraces beauty and
bounty. To learn more about Brie visit
www.briegrows.com.

Details and information on how to register
will be available in September. For more information
or to be put on an advance notice mailing list, please
contact Shelley deFosset at defosset@gmail.com. ☞



NARGS Piedmont Chapter Meeting

JC Raulston Arboretum

9:30 Gathering Time 10 am Program Begins

September 28

Hans Hansen

Director, New Plant Development
Walters Gardens, Zeeland, Mich.

**“Breeding Better Perennials from a
Gardener’s Perspective”**

Goodies to Share

If your last name begins with a letter below,
we encourage you to consider bringing a
goodie to share with others.



Sept A-C	Feb M-P
Oct D-F	March R-S
Nov G-H	April T-Y
Jan J-L	May Picnic

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cyndy Cromwell, Chair
Amelia Lane, Immediate Past Chair
Bobby Ward, Vice Chair/Program Chair
Elsa Liner, Sec.

Ralph Whisnant

David White, Treas -

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE:

Tim Alderton

Kirt Cox
Jim Hollister
Charlie Kidder,

TRILLIUM EDITOR

Marian Stephenson

Bobby Wilder, Distr.Mgr

Bobby Ward, Quality Review Editor

OTHER SIGNIFICANT POSITIONS:

Plant Sale Manager: Tim Alderton
Refreshments: Maurice Farrier

Message from the Chair

Cyndy Cromwell

At last, cool nights are returning to the baking North Carolina Piedmont, along with renewed energy for outdoor activities, like planting bulbs and exploring our state’s rich botanical treasures.

I hope you can attend our first meeting September 28, first because it’s a rare opportunity to hear one of the country’s top plant breeders, Hans Hansen of Walters Gardens.

There will also be information on the upcoming October bulb sale, organized by past chair Amelia Lane and Kirt Cox. Attractive samplers of unusual bulbs from Van Engelen wholesaler will be offered to members and others, at cost.

There will also be details on an October 13 day trip to Green Swamp Nature Preserve, home to native pitcher plants and other rarities. We are lucky in our chapter to have so many knowledgeable members, three of whom have offered to assist us in plant identifications and keeping to the trails!

Thanks so much to Tim Alderton, Charlie Kidder, and Zac Hill for your generosity! Further details will be sent to members via email. ✂

Community Share Page

If you have a favorite tool, tip, or technique that makes your gardening easier, more efficient or just more fun, we’d like to share it with other members..

Maybe a current favorite plant you enjoy?

Send a brief note, with photos, to:
Marian Stephenson, editor:
marian4236@yahoo.com.

Deadlines for receiving material are for issues in
2019 & 2020 are: 10/6/19, 12/19/19 and 2/25/20.