



# ARBORETUM ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

H A V E R F O R D C O L L E G E

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## AN EXOTIC REMEMBERED:

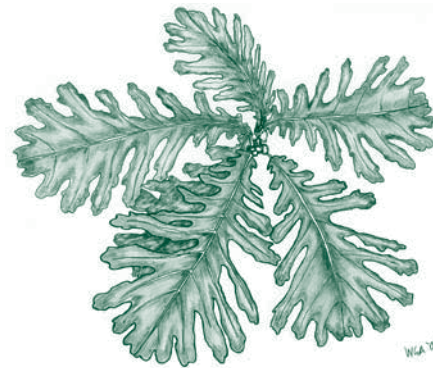
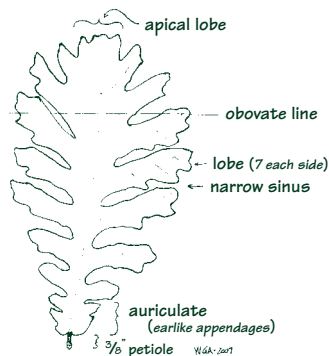
### *Quercus frainetto* 'Schmidt,' Italian oak or Hungarian oak

by William Astifan, Arboretum Director

This oak is not commonly found in cultivation in the United States but we are fortunate to have a good start on a specimen. *Quercus frainetto* is a member of the *Fagaceae* family in the white oak sub-species group. The tree was introduced into cultivation in 1838 and is native to Hungary, the Balkans and southern Italy. This cultivar was introduced by the J. Schmidt Nursery about 1989 and marketed under the registered trade name Forest Green oak. The cultivar 'Schmidt' is known to have better foliage that is more resistant to leaf spot which can be problematic.

The trade literature lists this cultivar as 50 feet tall and 30 feet wide, much smaller than the size in its native range. Since the cultivar is a relatively new introduction, I would still give it plenty of room because *Q. frainetto* grows to 110 feet tall in its native habitat. In a conversation I had recently with retired grounds manager Carmen Ianieri, he remembered two very large trees on his family's property in Italy. He noted it was a very large tree, and the family only had to cut one limb to supply their wood needs for the winter.

In cultivation, most experts agree, this tree has the potential to attain a height and spread of at least 80 feet under favorable conditions. The massive crown develops into a large oval shape on a straight, heavy trunk which is clear of branches for the first 30 to 40 feet. The bark on the young tree appears to have horizontal lenticels that fade as it grows, and the bark develops fissures that are tan in contrast to the brown bark. The new branches are stout, ascending upward to a very large cluster of terminal buds and leaves. Our specimen has not produced any fruit. The acorn is described as forming in groups of two to five, and



each is  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1-inch long in an oblong shape. It is enclosed with a cup covering  $\frac{1}{3}$  or more of the nut.

It is the leaf, however, that sets *Quercus frainetto* apart from other oaks. Each leaf has an intricate pattern of lobes and deeply rounded teeth. The oblong leaf will grow to 8 inches long and 4 inches at the broadest width which is above the center of the leaf, making it obovate in shape. There are seven lobes on each side forming narrow sinuses that almost reach the mid-rib. The mid-rib vein and the dominant lateral vein on each lobe are light green and stand out noticeably against the dark green leaf. The leaf tapers into two ear-like appendages, giving it an auriculated base. It is attached to the stem with a short  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch petiole. The tip, or apical lobe, of the leaf is usually further divided into three smaller lobes with dentate, or tooth-like edges. The dark green upper surface is lustrous with minute stellate (star-shaped) hairs making it rough to the touch. The underside is gray-green and downy, remaining distinctively pale looking even after the leaves have died and fallen off the tree. The fall color is a reddish-brown and presents a velvety appearance because of the surface hairs.

In the landscape, the tree adds a texture that is different from most of our commonly seen oaks. The leaves are in dense clusters that give it a well-adorned look and a massively strong appearance. So, if you are out for a walk on the east side of the Duck Pond, look for the distinctive foliage and you'll find this rather unusual specimen in our oak collection.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

*It is with pleasure and sadness that I say thank you to Betsy Hodges and Pat Rose whose terms of service on the executive committee ended at the annual meeting this year. I enjoyed working with Betsy over the nine years that I have been at Haverford and look forward to seeing Pat on a regular basis as she continues to volunteer in several gardens on campus. I am delighted to welcome Fritz Franks and Nancy Pasquier who are stepping in to fill those empty slots on the executive committee.*

*Once again, I sound like a weather forecaster but it is hard to report on horticulture activities without mentioning the lack of significant rainfall. We have been dry for eight weeks now into mid-October and the staff has been spending considerable time watering. This was particularly important as the team prepared for the open house of the renovated president's residence on campus. The site had been overwhelmed by contractors since early July, yet the team pulled together an amazing transformation in just a few days and even in the last few hours before the open house October 1. When you visit campus, take a drive by the house at 1 College Circle and enjoy all the hard work they did.*

*This all came in the midst of preparations for President Steve Emerson's inauguration on Saturday, October 6. Once again, the team pulled together and used their many talents and imaginations to decorate the campus in and around the events of the week. We utilized a collection of plants that we are placing in permanent plantings elsewhere now that the proceedings have concluded. One of the more unusual plants is *Symphoricarpos* 'Scarlet Pearl,' a cultivar of the common snowberry. Its berry-like drupe of pinkish white fruit is a great accent. Look for it behind the Whitehead Campus Center near the steps to the Bookstore.*

*The open house and inauguration festivities occurred right on the heels of the Arboretum Association's Annual Meeting September 20 when the staff lavishly decorated the gracious space in Founders Hall. This set a wonderful atmosphere for the reception, annual meeting, buffet dinner and place for our guest speaker presentation given by Rick Lewandowski, director of the Mt. Cuba Center for the Study of Piedmont Flora in Delaware. It was a superb evening for the 65 people attending, including our new college President Steve Emerson.*

*The staff did get some time off campus with our fall gardens trip September 11. It was a treat for all, including the staff, to look at three wonderful gardens in the Glen Mills and Chadds Ford areas. What a thrill it is for all of us to meet and spend time with such avid gardeners and with each other. We endured some rain but I could not find a dampened spirit anywhere.*

*So as you can see there is plenty going on, and now is no time to stop. As we head into the fall, this is the time we plan for the next year. When you are on campus, be sure to look us up, or if you see us out working, stop to say "Hi."*

Bill Astifan,  
Arboretum Manager

## WELCOME BACK

The Arboretum staff jumped right into the fall semester with a lineup of activities to introduce students, especially the freshmen, to the uniqueness of living and learning in a campus arboretum. During Customs Week, members of the Class of 2011 helped the staff plant a *Quercus nuttallii*, Nutall oak, as their Freshman Class Tree on the Dining Center side of Lloyd Hall.

For three days in the first week of classes, all freshmen and new faculty members were able to select as a gift a small plant for their dorm room or office from a special Arboretum display in the Dining Center lobby. Staff was on hand to give care tips to the new plant owners after a choice was made among the cacti, succulents and foliage tropical plants. At another table, the staff took orders for larger plants that would thrive in the lower light levels of dorms and offices. Samples ranged from *Sansevieria* to *Spathiphyllum*, *Croton*, *Philodendron* and *Dracaena*.

Students also could sign up as Arboretum members and receive a special T-shirt in addition to plant-sitting privileges in the greenhouse from the horticulturists over the five-week winter break. Over 100 students took advantage of this annual offer and are now wearing the handsome gray and green long-sleeved shirts around campus. This year's shirt design is an encore of the sold-out athletic shirt spoof that celebrates Haverford's collection of 17 State Champion trees. The tree in the spotlight this year is the *Quercus rubra* by Stokes Hall, the largest known Red oak measured in Pennsylvania.



**Arboretum staff members (from left) Martha Van Artsdalen, Carol Wagner and Mike Startup greet new and returning students with plants and T-shirts. This year's shirt celebrates 17 state champion trees on campus—the largest known measured trees of their species in the state. G04-15 is the inventory number of the *Quercus rubra* behind Stokes Hall and refers to the tree's geographical location.**

## NATIVE GARDEN PRESERVED

by Martha Van Artsdalen, Plant Curator

During three months of renovations to the college president's house at tree-shaded #1 College Circle, one garden area remained an untouched island in the midst of a flotilla of contractors' trucks and stacks of building materials.

This college house had been home to Tom and Louise Tritton for 10 years during his presidency. Soon after they moved in, Louise realized the front yard's dappled shade was the perfect location to showcase plants native to the woodlands of southeastern Pennsylvania. Working with the horticulturists on the Arboretum staff, this area soon became the first campus garden dedicated solely to native plants.

This spring, the college's Committee for Environmental Responsibility (CER), composed of students, faculty and staff, recognized Louise Tritton's efforts to establish this garden which demonstrates how to have an attractive ornamental landscape while at the same time preserving potentially endangered and almost always overlooked native plants.

A small plaque reads: This native plant garden celebrates Louise Tritton and her dedication to the diverse beauty of our natural environment. Earth Day 2007.

Louise, in thanking everyone involved with the project, spoke of her pleasure in the beauty of the blooms and in watching the ferns, mayapples and Solomon's seal unfurl. "I am particularly thrilled that this garden will be kept as a demonstration of the native species in the area... I am honored" by this "perfect gift."

Louise began work on the garden with then-horticulturist Doug Croft and Claudia Kent who is now arboretum supervisor.

"The bones of the garden—trees and shrubs—were there," Claudia says. "The premise is to showcase the flora of southeastern Pennsylvania so I did some research and put in a lot of native perennials.

"I picked some perennials I never had heard of, natives like *Zizia aurea* (Golden Alexander). I added several different ferns, the native orchid *Spiranthes odorata* 'Chadds Ford', some different viburnums and native azaleas as well as *Baptisia australis* (False indigo) and *Cimicifuga racemosa* (Black cohosh).

"It's an area of high shade, mimicking woodland with dappled shade in the spring. So we planted *Amelanchier arborea* (Downy serviceberry) and the native *Magnolia virginiana* (Sweet bay magnolia).

"The soil was very poor so we added compost and pine needles to bring down the pH. Still, we've had problems with *Kalmia latifolia* which is a shame as mountain laurel is Pennsylvania's state flower.

"Yet, the *Baptisia* has done outstandingly, along



**Student Arboretum worker Sarah Allard works on the finishing touches as staff re-landscaped and decorated for the opening of the newly renovated president's house at #1 College Circle.**

with the *Cimicifuga*. And the red maple we put in about four years ago has gone bananas."

Horticulturist Mike Startup has tended the garden for several seasons now, and he lists two challenges in his work: getting perennials into bloom at the right time of the academic year and battling goutweed organically by hand-pulling.

He has accomplished spring bloom by planting the low-growing native Foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*) and *Phlox* 'Sherwood Purple.' Hairy alumroot (*Heuchera villosa* 'Autumn Bride') gives the garden color in the fall.

"They all seed in too, which is nice."

This year, deer browsing started to become an issue. "As the mayapples were emerging, the deer nibbled the shoots," he says. Mike's solution was to dot the perennial beds with short sticks, about a thumb-size in diameter, "so they'd poke at the deer's face."

Last year, Mike planted many plug-size perennials that "grew unbelievably and put on a strong bloom this spring and summer."

"I'm excited; the garden is only getting better each year."

As Steve Emerson takes up residence at #1 College Circle, the hubbub of renovation work has calmed down. So, too, has the garden as cold weather approaches. But come spring, be on the lookout for the return of bloom and color. Mike promises the approach to this 1889 house will be a sea of ankle-high color—wisps of white foam flower, dots of blue phlox and the nodding coral and yellow-trimmed heads of columbine. Colonies of mayapples will compete with emerging alumroot leaves for attention.

And a new season will arrive in this garden legacy begun by Louise Tritton.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, November 11 • 2 p.m.

### Fall Lecture

**“Partnering Perennials with Shrubs”**  
by Bruce Crawford of Rutgers Garden  
Sharpless Auditorium • Free admission

Shrubs are the backbone of the garden, says Bruce Crawford, director of the botanic gardens of Rutgers University, therefore their associations with other plants can make the garden come alive. He will speak on shrubs that work well with perennials and provide interesting combinations of color and texture throughout the growing season. Join us for the lecture and reception that follows. The program is jointly sponsored by the Haverford Arboretum, the Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group, and the Henry Foundation for Botanical Research.

Sunday, March 30, 2008 • 2 p.m.

### Spring Lecture

**“Rhododendrons”**  
by Horticulturist Robert Herald

Tuesday, May 20, 2008 • 9 to 5 p.m.

### Spring Gardens Trip

Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, N.J.

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS



This fall, Fritzi Franks (at left) and Nancy Pasquier joined the Executive Committee of the Haverford College Arboretum Association. Fritzi retired from the college last year after working with three presidents as executive assistant. During that time, she also spent many volunteer hours planting and cleaning up the Founders Courtyard garden. Nancy’s experience has been with non-profits both as a volunteer and an employee. This spring, she completed the three-year Barnes Foundation Arboretum School. At Haverford, she enjoys walking the Nature Trail with her standard poodle.

## INAUGURATION PREPARATIONS



Staff Horticulturists Mike Startup (foreground) and Charlie Jenkins created a special landscape of young trees, fruiting shrubs, foliage plants and bright perennials in front of the inaugural tent on Founders Green.



### Executive Committee

#### Officers

*President:* Lathrop B. Nelson, Jr.  
*Vice President:* Gillian Wiedorn  
*Arboretum Director:* Bill Astifan  
*Secretary:* Anne Donnell  
*Past President:* Pat Turner

#### Members at Large

Jacki Delaney  
Katharine Fisher  
Fritzi Franks  
Nancy Pasquier  
Marshall J. Walthew

#### Committee Chairmen

*Membership:* Ann Ashmead  
*Programs:* Martha Van Artsdalen

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[www.haverford.edu/arboretum/home.htm](http://www.haverford.edu/arboretum/home.htm)