



February Meeting

Wednesday, February 8, 7:30 p.m.
Patricia Knight, Gardener and Collector

“The Botanical Obsession: Plants and Porcelain”

Patricia Knight will discuss the role of botany in the 18th century and how it changed both the arts and sciences, and how horticulture in turn had an effect on botanical prints and the decoration of porcelain. The outcome of explorations and the part played by North America will be discussed as well as the work of the great scientists, Carl Linneaus and Georg Oeder.

The changing landscape of the great estates, the research at botanical centers such as the Chelsea Physic Garden, and the popular interest in horticulture led to books illustrated with botanical prints by Georg Ehret and to the Botanical magazine published by William Curtis. As a result, botanical decoration became fashionable and this will be illustrated with examples from Meissen, Chelsea, Derby, the Royal Danish porcelain factory and the profusion of botanical wares seen in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

Patricia Knight was born in England and has a degree in English and European History. She emigrated to Massachusetts with her husband in 1960. Always a keen gardener, she gained a landscape certificate in Boston. She is the owner of Patrician Antiques specializing in ceramics and silver. A long time member of the San Francisco Ceramic Circle and the Western Horticultural Society, she recently joined the Garden Club of Los Altos. She is a fan of new technology and is the webmaster for both WHS and the GCLA. Her plant interests include Mediterranean climate plants and the drought resistant plants of Australia and South Africa.

Having drawn a spray of blackberries to pass her art exam at Oxford at the age of 16, she came to understand the challenge of botanical drawing and the attention to detail it requires.

MEETING LOCATION Our monthly meetings feature the speakers listed above; doors open at 7 p.m. and meetings begin at 7:30. The location is Christ Episcopal Church, Parish Hall, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos. (See page 4 for map.)

This month we are not meeting for dinner with the speaker before the meeting.



Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** for the WHS that is of particular interest to you? It would be much appreciated! Please call Pat Knight at 650-941-6136 if you are interested.

March Meeting

March 14 Shelagh Fritz, “The Gardens of Alcatraz”

January Speaker Notes

If this month’s speaker looked familiar, then you’ve been here awhile. Marcia Donahue, Berkeley artist and gardener, greeted our audience by reminding us that she spoke to WHS about twenty years ago. “Planting Sculpture, Sculpting Plants” is a work in progress – and this artist has been working – and playing – in many gardens for some time.

Marcia stated that her work, be it animal, vegetable or mineral, is inspired by plants. We were treated to a wide array of slides, such as sculptured rock in Chinatown, San Francisco, Angkor Wat Rock Sculpture Face in Berkeley and Peckerwood Garden in Texas. We saw serpentine sculptures, ceramics, spiraled plants and “bottle” trees. We were treated to bowling ball “mulch,” ceramic “eyes,” and a “knitter” with real spider web yarn.

While all of this seems a bit incongruous, I came away with the impression that there is a tremendous amount of thought, work (and yes, money) that is invested to make these creations relevant. Our speaker, while admitting to being attracted by the garden of absurdity and spherical shapes, seems to pull it off with a careful balance of endemic placement, kinetics and humor. She’s not alone either, working with some top name designers and clients desiring the unusual and expressive.

Marica Donahue’s garden in Berkeley (where else?) is open to all interested parties on Sunday afternoons. A visit to her garden sounds more like an adventure than the proverbial walk down the primrose path. Anyone interested?

~Mark McCabe

Address/ Contact info for Marcia Donahue:
Our Own Stuff Gallery Garden
3017 Wheeler Street
Berkley, California 94705
thanks2flora@comcast.net



*Curtis Print
“Meadow Saffron”*

Western Hort News

Note from the President

On behalf of all the Board members, we welcome Liz Calhoon, Clayton Neece and Judy Wong as our new Board of Directors members. Thank you all for stepping up to join us. ~Richard Tiede

Annual General Meeting Report

With the required quorum of 25+ members present, at 7:35 p.m. on January 11, 2012, President Richard Tiede called to order the annual WHS meeting at Christ Episcopal Church, Los Altos. Richard gave us a general introductory overview about WHS and upcoming meetings and events.

Treasurer Daxin Liu reported an amount of \$16,540 in our checking account, along with \$30,060 in CD reserves. Daxin's overall assessment: we are in good financial shape.

Our President recognized Sherry Hall and Steve Staiger, both retiring Board members, for their numerous contributions and hard work. Both were presented with a gift. Richard then called for Board nominations. From the floor, Clayton Neece offered himself as a candidate; Katie Wong nominated Judy Wong, who accepted, and Liz Calhoon was nominated. All three were approved by unanimous voice vote. Congratulations and thank you!

Pacific Horticulture representative Leslie Dean reported on past events and the status of the society. After twelve years, editor Richard Turner is stepping down. On-going interviews for this replacement are being conducted. (Note: Lorene Edwards Forkner is the new editor; "meet" Lorene online at <http://plantedathome.com>, blog, gardening resource and recipe archive.) Leslie mentioned that membership is down from previous years, reflecting a decline of readership in the print industry. However, two generous donations and one grant have enabled the society to upgrade completely their online publications, as well as post complete archives. Leslie also stated that there is an opening for a Pac Hort representative.

After recognizing Marianne Mueller, newsletter editor, and Jackie Doda, contributing writer, President Tiede adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m. ~Mark McCabe, Recording Secretary

WHS Hosts the PuPS at the February Meeting

The Pop Up Plant Stars (PuPS) is a unique new collaboration of four small, local, owner-operated nurseries: *Carman's Nursery* (celebrating their 75th anniversary this year with bonsai starters, dwarf conifers, rock garden plants & unusual edibles), *Cole Canyon Farm* (organic, culinary and medicinal herbs & veggie starts), *Gold Rush Nursery* (plants that are water-wise and/or provide food or habitat for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects) and *Terra Sole Nurseries* (a boutique nursery specializing in new & old, unusual and climate appropriate perennials, succulent & shrubs). Bring your questions and talk with the people who grow the plants. These four nurseries are excited to bring 'Plants to the People' in a new way. Shop with them and support Western Hort at the same time—15% of all sales go to WHS. Let's turn buying plants into a party! *You can learn more about these nurseries at their websites or at facebook.com/popupplantstars.* ~Nancy Schramm

Hot Plant Picks

WHS is once again in charge of the Hot Plant Picks exhibit at the SF Flower & Garden Show, March 21-25 at the San Mateo Event Center. Sign up at the February meeting for a two-hour shift and get a free pass for that day of the show. This is a chance to hang out with some of the coolest new plants on the block. Call or email Nancy Schramm if you have a little extra time to help gather plants or set up the display. (408) 847-2313 or greenthumb@carmansnursery.com. ~Nancy Schramm

28 Years Ago

Western Hort met on February 13, 1984 to hear Mabel Crittenden talk about "The Boundless Beauty of Spring in the Western Deserts." Mabel was a much loved and respected member of WHS, had taught at Lodi High School and San Jose State University, and was Librarian at Portola Valley Schools. She published *Wildflowers of the West* in 1975.

Included in the plant notes were three plants native to the Southwest: *Fouquieria columnaris* (boojum tree), *Cercidium floridum* (palo verde) and *Bursera microphylla* (elephant tree) brought in by Bill Duncan; Mary Kaye shared an Australian native, *Thryptomene calycina*, and Charlotte Anderson brought in three plants in bloom: *Anemone blanda*, *Iris reticulata*, and *Bulbinella floribunda*. There is one mystery in the notes, I'm not sure if it's a typo? Supposedly *Salix chanomeles* 'Akame Uanagi' was brought in by Ed Carman, with 3-4" long catkins. I can't find it in any book, so I wonder what it really was? ~Nancy Schramm

Plant of the Month: Teucrium scorodonia 'Crispum Marginatum'

I have a new favorite plant. *Teucrium scorodonia* 'Crispum Marginatum' has stolen my heart. I've only had it since June, and got it as a small rooted cutting. It didn't keel over and die on me right away, so that put us on first name basis. Everyone who sees it wants one, so I hope the cuttings I just stuck will root. (That would make us *best* friends.) The leaves on this plant look like they are going to a party. The middle, flat part of the leaf has a pebbled-suede texture, and the outer edge is extravagantly ruffled and frilled.

They are a nice apple green most of the year, with a little purple blush in cold weather (we got down to twenty-six degrees a few weeks back). And those aren't just plain old ruffles—they are rimmed with white for a finishing touch. Since my personal garden is hopeless for gophers, and I've kept my only plant in a container for safety, I called my friend Michelle Bosch to ask how this *Teucrium* behaves in her garden. I was instantly jealous to find out that she has not one, but two of these beauties in her Redwood City garden. Michelle has both plants growing happily in dry shade. She's had them about a year and a half, and started with small plants. She watered them at first to get them established, but even their first summer in the ground, they survived and grew well with infrequent irrigation—maybe every three weeks.

Teucrium scorodonia 'Crispum Marginatum' is a great groundcover for part shade. It only gets about four to six inches tall, and in a year or so will cover a patch up to two feet in diameter. The summer flower spikes aren't showy, but I like them, and when they finish you can shear off the spent flowers and some of the foliage for a fresh new crop of leaves. Great plant companions would be *Heuchera* (coral bells) and *Helleborus*. Michelle suggested that this *Teucrium* has great potential for dry shade areas, and would consider trying it out under oak trees—just not right next to the trunk.

I have a very special nursery to thank for giving me my start of this *Teucrium*. I visited **California Flora Nursery** in Fulton last June for the very first time. I don't get out much—they've been around since 1981. But Sherrie Althouse and Phil Van Soelen have created a nursery to delight the hearts of true plant lovers. They specialize in California native plants, as well as other plants that do well in our Mediterranean climate. They do most of their propagation on-site and low-tech—their tiny prop house is a fascinating example of what can be done with available materials and a lot of creative design. No vast vistas of stainless steel here! Not only do Sherrie and Phil grow an exceptional palette of plants, but they are willing to share their knowledge and understanding of these plants. Their long-time employee Liz has created a website that is full of information—available to anyone. Check it out at calfloranursery.com. The nursery closes for the month of

January, but will re-open February 1st. You can contact the nursery at (707) 528-8813 for hours. ~Nancy Schramm

Horticultural Calendar

Growing South African Bulbs by Ernesto Sandoval, director of UC Davis Botanical Conservatory. Feb 20, 7:15 pm, County Fair Building at The San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum. See calhortsociety.org.

GSBF Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt – Mammoth Fundraiser. Feb 25 & 26. Auction of bonsai trees, pots, and supplies; vendor day; presentations. Bonsai Garden, Lake Merritt, Oakland. See gsbf-bonsai.org/lake-merritt.



Teucrium scorodonia 'Crispum Marginatum'

Photo: Annie's Annuals

Western Horticultural Society Officers and Board Members

President: Richard Tiede

Vice President: Christine Bate

Recording Secretary: Mark McCabe

Acting Treasurer: Daxin Liu

Other Board Members: Roberta Barnes, Liz Calhoun, Jon Craig, Abby Garner, Clayton Neece, Rosalie Shepherd, Judy Wong and Katie Wong.

To contact us, please send email to info@westernhort.org, or contact Chris Egan at 650-948-4614, or send mail to Western Horticulture Society, PO Box 60507, Palo Alto, CA, 94306.

About membership in Western Hort:

To join or renew, send your name, address, phone number and a check made out to "Western Horticultural Society" to PO Box 620673, Woodside, CA 94062-0673.

Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes four issues of Pacific Horticulture magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Sustaining is \$45, Contributing is \$60 and Plant Lover is \$100+. We have also added a Family membership of \$50 for two or more members at the same address, and a Student rate of \$20.

Please visit our website at westernhort.org for a membership form.

Newsletter Submissions and Address Changes

Please send info for the March newsletter by February 18 to Marianne Mueller, mrm@sonic.net or 650-326-2029.

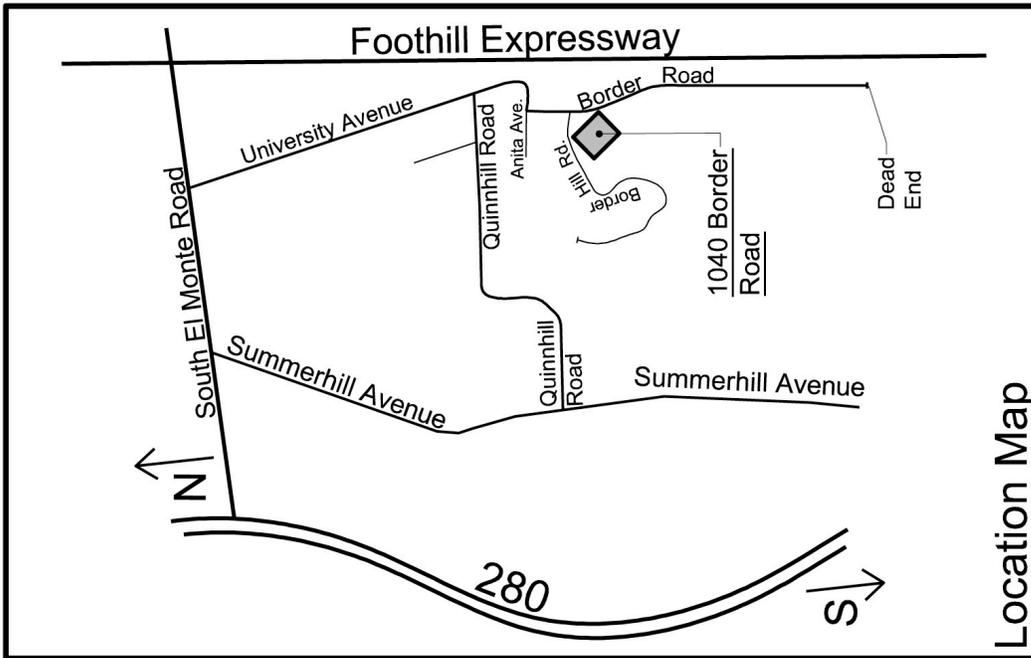
Please send address changes to grew@pacbell.net or 650-851-5162.



PO Box 60507
Palo Alto, CA 94306

First Class Mail

VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



Western Horticultural Society
Monthly Meetings
Christ Episcopal Church
Parish Hall
1040 Border Road, Los Altos