



## Upcoming Events

NGC General Meeting  
January 12, 2022  
Zoom Meeting

Horticulture Workshop  
January 19, 2022  
Zoom Meeting

Horticultural Therapy  
**CANCELLED**  
Norristown State Hospital,  
Norristown, PA

NGC General Meeting  
February 9, 2022  
Check Email Notice

Horticulture Workshop  
February 16, 2022  
Zoom Meeting

NGC General Meeting  
March 9, 2022  
Fairview Village Church  
Eagleville, PA

Horticultural Therapy  
March 16, 2022  
Abington Adult Day Care,  
Lansdale, PA

Flower Design Workshop  
March 22, 2022  
Wissahickon Valley Public  
Library, Blue Bell, PA

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# Garden Clippings



Norristown Garden Club  
Newsletter

January 2022 – Volume 43, No. 1

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## Message from the Holiday House Tour Chairs

December 9 and 10, 2021

Five Historic Buildings

How wonderful it was to be able to hold the Norristown Garden Club's (NGC) 71<sup>st</sup> Holiday House Tour. And what an historic event it was! Due to the continued pandemic throughout 2021, our usual indoor Holiday House Tour was not possible. As a result, this year the club partnered with 18th century Montgomery County Historic sites in order to bring a more historical perspective to the holiday season and our seasonal tour.

Five historic locations were selected, on and around Skippack Pike, where George Washington stopped as he marched his army on to the Battle of Germantown. They included Pennypacker Mills in Schwenksville and Peter Wentz Farmstead in Worcester. These two locations housed officers and provided provisions for Washington's army. Further south on Skippack Pike, the Bethel Hill United Methodist Church in Lansdale was chosen since its original site was used as a hospital for the wounded and as a burial ground for those who died there. Hope Lodge in Fort Washington was also included. The Lodge had been surrounded by other troop encampments during the period. The last selected historic site was the slightly younger Highlands Mansion also in Fort Washington. The Mansion is an NGC tour favorite and has been included in previous holiday tours.

The Historic Holiday House stage was set with the selection of these five historic locations. House Chairs and Co-Chairs for each site were enlisted, designers and helpers were recruited, and floral and horticultural themes were determined. Each team decorated the outside of their site with period-relevant designs crafted by NGC members in the meticulous manner for which we are known. Two sites, the Highlands and the Bethel Hill Church, permitted the decoration of their interiors in the club's usual exceptional manor. The other historic locations had their own period-specific indoor decorations.

We sold 855 tickets. The supervisors of the historic sites really appreciated the opportunity to have so many people visit their site so that they could share their history and provide a forum for people to learn what each site has to offer. The historic tour also received a number of great reviews from local newspapers and from the many friends of the club. So, it is without a doubt that the club's 71<sup>st</sup> Holiday House Tour goes down in the club's

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## Upcoming Events, Continued

NGC General Meeting  
April 13, 2022  
Cedarbrook Country Club  
Blue Bell, PA  
*(Note Change in Location)*

Horticulture Workshop  
April 20, 2022  
Wissahickon Valley Public  
Library, Blue Bell, PA

Flower Design Workshop  
April 26, 2022  
Wissahickon Valley Public  
Library, Blue Bell, PA

Horticultural Therapy  
April 21, 2022  
Providence Place  
Collegeville, PA

NGC General Meeting  
May 11, 2022  
Fairview Village Church  
Eagleville, PA

Plant Exchange and Covered  
Dish Social  
May 19, 2022  
Coughlin Residence,  
Collegeville, PA

Horticultural Therapy  
Date TBD  
Senior Adult Activities Center,  
Norristown, PA

Horticulture Workshop  
Date TBD  
Goodly Gardens  
Worcester, PA

history as a great success and as the first tour conducted on such a grand scale with historic sites!

We would like to thank all those who worked on preparing the Historic Holiday House Tour. The House Chairs and Co-Chairs need a special "Thank You" for guiding their teams to such outstanding creativity: Ginger Hunsicker and Rosemarie Hardy at Pennypacker Mills, Karen Nemeth and Beth Bynon at Peter Wentz, Diane Powell and Barbara Stoebenau at Bethel Hill Church, Ana Maria Hartman and Nancy Sliner at the Highlands Mansion, and Chris Yanak and Melinda Bates at Hope Lodge.

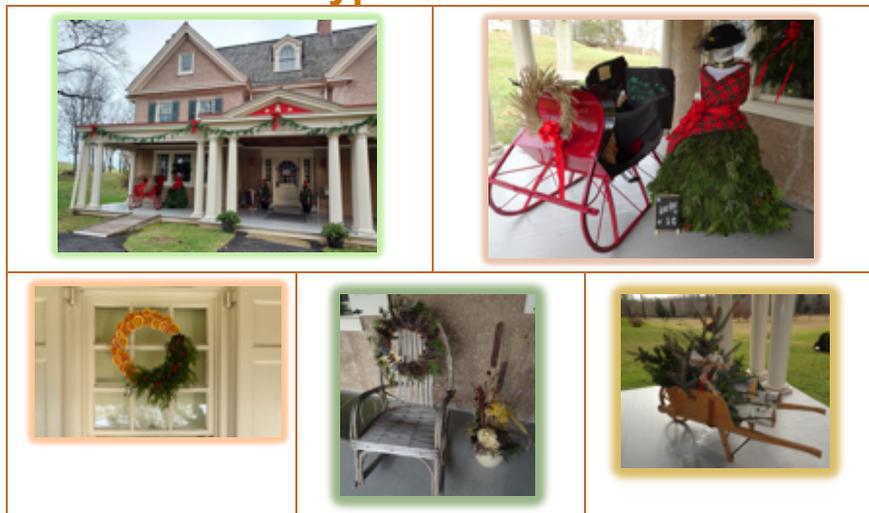
A special "Thank You" also goes to the "Behind-the-Scenes" teams as follows: Jill Evans for publicity and newspaper articles that introduced our Holiday House Tour to a new audience and Debbie Hightower who stirred our patrons and their friends with Facebook postings. The ticket sales ran longer than usual, keeping Judy Jenkins (PayPal), Barbara Stoebenau (Mail), and Kathy Costello (meetings) busy. A thank you is also due to Nancy Sliner for designing the brochures, to Jean Branco and Jane Comroe for working very hard to recruit the absolutely vital hostesses, to Nancy Hannum for photography, and to Anita Lehman for computer editing, preparing flyers, and producing the slide show for the January meeting.

Again, thank you to all those who participated in this year's historic tour, to those others who supported us this year, and to those who will join in on the fun next year!

Holiday House Chairs,

*Caren Puschak and Barbara Stoebenau*

## Pennypacker Mills



## Bethel Hill United Methodist Church



Photos of the Historic Holiday House Tour are courtesy of various NGC members.

## Peter Wentz Farmstead



## Highlands Mansion



## Hope Lodge





Photos from the New Members Lunch 'n' Learn courtesy of B. Bynon.



Above photos of the gardens at La Provence French Cuisine in Ambler by B. Andon.

## New Members Lunch 'n' Learn

October 6, 2021

After a long delay due to Covid19 related-issues, the New Members Lunch 'n' Learn was finally held on October 6, 2021, at the Wissahickon Valley Public Library in Blue Bell. New members from the last two years and some of the current prospective members attended the luncheon. The program was packed with valuable information about the club and its activities. The new members were then asked questions regarding what had been presented, and prizes were awarded for correct answers! Everyone also enjoyed the box lunch that was served. New members completed a survey at the conclusion of the event to provide feedback for making future Lunch 'n' Learns even more fun! Thank you to Ana Maria



Hartman and her team for providing such a warm welcome to our new and prospective Norristown Garden Club members!



## NGC General Meeting

October 13, 2021

The October 13 meeting was held at the Fairview Village Church in Eagleville. At the meeting, Trish Russell presented the 2021 Landscape Design Award to La Provence French Cuisine, located on Butler Pike in Ambler. This prestigious award is presented to a local business or



T. Judge (left) and F. Propato (right).

individual and acknowledges the beautification of a public space. Timothy Judge, General Manager, accepted the award on behalf of the restaurant owner, Cindy Jiminez. Timothy was accompanied by Franco Propato of Franco Propato Landscaping, LLC. Franco is a young and talented landscape designer who created the beautiful landscaping at the restaurant. We thank Franco for designing such a lovely space for members to enjoy while dining at the restaurant and Cindy for giving him the opportunity to do so!!



*Selected photos of some of Marge's suggestions for native plants. Photos by B. Andon.*

## Garden Poem

### Snow

Branches on the evergreens,  
are dressed in snowy white,  
as soft the moonlight sparkles,  
on this blanket of the night.  
Delicate, untouched and pure,  
is found the ground below,  
as gentle moon beams glimmer,  
on the freshly fallen snow.

... by Pamela Joyce Randolph



After the presentation of the award, Marge Eberz gave a lecture entitled, "Let's Go Native – Gardening with Native Plants." Marge has been a club member since 1988 and was named a PA State Exceptional Horticulturist by the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania. Marge's lecture focused on why we should use native plants in our gardens. She provided many examples of native plants that would be suitable for growing in our area. She also discussed invasive plants that should be avoided. In addition to her slide lecture, Marge prepared poster boards that were full of pertinent information regarding native and invasive plants. Thank you Marge for a really informative and interesting lecture!



*Photo of Marge's poster presentation by B. Andon.*

The October 13 meeting was also one of the five meetings throughout the year when the club runs a "Show of the Month" mini flower show. Diane Powell is the new Chairperson for these shows and has been doing a great job! The theme for October was "Fall Colors" to be expressed in a creative mass design. The Horticulture focused on Chrysanthemums using one "mum" spray with foliage in a container. There were many beautiful entries for meeting attendees to appreciate. Congratulations to all of those who entered the October show and to those who won a ribbon! And thank you Diane for helping to make our monthly meetings very beautiful indeed!



## Garden Quote

In every winter's heart there is a quivering spring, and behind the veil of each night there is a shinning dawn.

...Kahlil Gibran



Photo by B. Andon.



*Pictures of NGC members attending Morgan Log House tour courtesy of Jane Irvin-Klotz. Additional pictures are from the Morgan Log House website.*



*Pictures of fall flower arrangements by B. Andon.*

## Horticulture Workshop

October 19, 2021

Morgan Log House

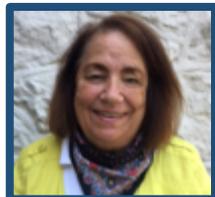
For the October horticulture workshop, interested members visited the Morgan Log House on Weikel Road in Towamencin Township. The Morgan Log House is an historic home and is described as a restored example of domestic architecture. The land was originally owned and farmed by Daniel Boone's grandparents Edward and Elizabeth. The Cassel family bought the log cabin and acreage after the revolutionary war and owned it for 99 years. Both the Morgan and Cassel families were cloth makers. Members received an extensive and informative talk about life in the 1700's from Tim Betz, the executive Director of the historic home. Tim walked members through the three main rooms of the house while explaining, in detail, the use and contents of each room. Everyone enjoyed Tim's very informative talk.



## Flower Design Workshop

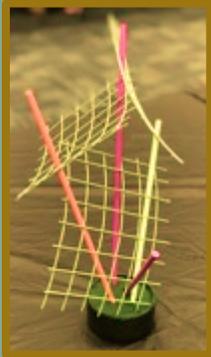
October 26, 2021

Fun with Armatures



It was great fun to have Beth Bartle lead the October Flower Design Workshop. Beth is a member of the Bala Cynwyd Garden Club, The National Federation of Garden Clubs, and the Garden Club of America. She also is a certified judge and often enters the Philadelphia Flower Show.

Beth instructed workshop attendees on the use of armatures in floral design. An armature is a structural framework that is typically constructed of natural materials and is used to support the components of a flower



*Photos of the armatures prepared by Beth Bartle for use in the October design workshop and some of the workshop attendees are by B. Andon.*



arrangement. Most armatures are hidden, as in the case of oasis foam or a kenzan, but many armatures are quite artistic and can become the focus of a design. Once one understands the use of armatures, one realizes that their selection is only limited by one's imagination! Such was the case in the design Beth presented for workshop attendees. She employed colorfully painted garden wire and thin dowels as the structure to support flowers. All attendees were able to incorporate these armature components into wonderful floral designs. Thank you Beth for presenting such an informative and creative class!



## Fall Luncheon Meeting

**November 10, 2021**

NGC members were excited to attend the club's annual Fall Luncheon Meeting held at the William Penn Inn, Gwynedd, PA. The meeting turned out to be quite a festive event. The highlight of the meeting was a presentation by the guest flower designer, Jane Godshalk, entitled, "Celebrating with Flowers – Inspirations from Nature for Home and Show".



Jane is a member of the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD), a longtime faculty member at Longwood Gardens, the author of several books, and winner of many floral design awards. She has also been featured in publications such as the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Green Scene magazine. Jane prepared multiple flower arrangements, all of which were spectacular! Each of her designs was raffled off to members. Congratulations to the winners of the flower arrangements, and thank you, Jane, for demonstrating your expert skills at our luncheon!



*Photos of Jane Godshalk's flower designs by various NGC members attending the luncheon.*



*All photos of Flower Design Workshop by A. Lehman and B. Andon.*



## Flower Design Workshop

November 23, 2021

### Thanksgiving Centerpiece Wreath

Barbara Leiby, the Flower Design Workshop chair, instructed workshop attendees on how to make a beautiful fall-themed centerpiece for Thanksgiving using an oasis foam circle. Barbara provided many flowers and types of vegetation of interest to include in the wreath, but she also encouraged workshop attendees to bring garden materials, fruits, and/or nuts from their own gardens and homes in order to customize their wreaths. As a result, there was a wonderful variety of beautiful arrangements to view by the end of the workshop. The wreaths were also structured to accommodate a candle of choice in the center.



Thank you, Barbara, for helping make all our Thanksgiving Day tables beautiful!





Jane Irvin-Klotz and her daughter at Flower Design Workshop.

Marge Eberz offers tips (to the right) for the winter months to help make your gardens more beautiful. Thank you Marge!



## Video

Looking forward to making a flower arrangement with winter flowering hellebores? Watch this helpful video on the proper cutting stage of hellebore flowers.

<https://youtu.be/3xclJPEX6ug>

## Club Membership

Do you know someone who would like to join the NGC? If you do, please consider being their sponsor and contact the club's New Member Chairperson, Ginger Hunsicker, by email at [ginger3131@verizon.net](mailto:ginger3131@verizon.net) or invite them to visit the club's website at [www.norristowngardenclub.org](http://www.norristowngardenclub.org).



## Horticulture Tips from Marge

### January, February, and March

#### January-February

##### Indoor Plants

- Give your indoor plants attention. Wipe leaves with a clean cloth, removing any holiday dust and glitter. Keep the soil moist but not soggy, as soils tend to dry out more quickly during the winter months. Snip away dead or discolored leaves. Inspect leaves and stems for signs of insects, such as mealybugs and scale. Isolate and treat plants that appear to be infected or discard the plants.

##### Holiday Flowering Plants: After-Bloom Care

- Place poinsettias in bright light and keep the soil moist. Discard plants that lose their leaves or show signs of insects or disease.
- Pinch off spent blooms from Christmas cactus and keep this plant in bright light with moist soil.
- Cyclamen tubers should continue to bloom during the winter months. Avoid wetting the leaves and stems and drain away excess water to prevent tuber rot. Pluck faded flowers and leaves from the plant. New leaves and blooms may appear during the blooming cycle. Fertilize every other month.
- Remove the floral stalk from your amaryllis after the flowers have faded. Continue to water and fertilize the bulbs during the winter.
- Paperwhite narcissus bulbs can be discarded after blooming. They are not likely to bloom again.

##### Deicing

- Salt deicers are a necessary evil this time of year, but they take their toll on trees and shrubs when ice melts into the ground. Salt buildup in the soil can become toxic, leading to twig dieback, leaf or needle burn, reduced growth, and ultimately, the death of the tree. Maple, spruce, pine, and ash trees are especially susceptible to salt in the soil. To help these trees in areas where there has been salting, wait until temperatures are above freezing for three or more days and then water around the trees with a sugar mixture made up of one ounce of sugar to 0.5 liter of water (approximately 2 cups of water).

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## Norristown Garden Club

The Norristown Garden Club is a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc.; Central Atlantic



Region of State Garden Clubs, Inc.; and a Charter Member of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP), District XI. NGC is the largest federated garden club in the state of Pennsylvania.

## Newsletter Contributions

If you would like to contribute news, photographs, or helpful hints for possible inclusion in the quarterly NGC Garden Clippings Newsletter, please contact the editor, Barbara Andon, via email at [barbaraandon@verizon.net](mailto:barbaraandon@verizon.net).

### Wildlife Control

- Remove debris and weeds from around your plants. This reduces hiding places of mice and shrews.
- If the warm weather of December brought the emergence of daylilies, you can protect them from deer eating them by spreading a cedar mulch over them. Deer do not like the smell of cedar. If you had a live Christmas tree, cut the branches off the main stem and spread them over the emerging daylilies too.

### MARCH

- Spring will soon be here, but it is still too early to work with the soil outdoors. However, you can start getting ready for the planting season by washing pots and trays with soapy water. Be sure to add some bleach to the water to help kill fungus diseases. Check gardening tools. Clean and sharpen pruners. This is also a good time to start a gardening journal to keep track of your plants that grow, as well as the ones that do not grow. This way you will know where plants are needed. Add photos of your garden throughout the year.
- As you walk around the yard, remove matted down leaves from emerging bulbs.
- Trim off last year's growth from ornamental grasses and ferns.
- Do not prune butterfly bushes or caryopteris until new growth starts.
- Check plants for winter injury. This includes discolored evergreen needles or leaves, dead branches, and heaved root systems. When new growth begins in the spring, prune all dead branches and twigs back to within an inch above a live bud. Apply fertilizer in soil around winter-damaged plants and water deeply.
- Order seeds from a nursery or buy in stores while they are still available. But do not start seeds too early indoors or they will get spindly. Herbs usually do well on a sunny window.