

# MEETING OF APRIL 7, 2014

## STRAWBERRY MANSION IN FAIRMOUNT PARK

President Linda Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:45. She thanked Ellie Penniman, Chair of the Day, and Hostesses Jane Kline, Lesley Undercofler and Beth Bartle for providing food and drink.

March Minutes were approved.

Announcements:

Letters for the admission of Margaret Sager are being circulated.

Community/Conservation money has been allocated for the coming year as follows:

- Wissahickon Valley Water Shed-\$500.00
- Bartram's Garden-\$500.00
- Delaware Riverkeeper-\$500.00
- Schuylkill Valley Nature Center-\$250.00
- Stroud Water Research Center-\$250.00
- Awbury Arboretum-\$250.00
- Jenkins Arboretum-\$250.00
- Morris Arboretum-\$100.00
- Lower Merion Conservancy-\$100.00
- Pennsylvania Horticultural Society-\$100.00
- Student Conservation Assoc.-\$1,000.00

The Morton Ballet and Dues notice are to be sent together in early May.

On Saturday, May 10, Laura and Ken Mitchell are hosting a party in their home for all Weeders, husbands, guests. As a bow to modern technology, invitations have been sent via Evite for those using computers. Invitations will be sent by mail to five Weeders who do not use the computer. Cocktails, light supper fare are to be served. In line with the theme "Hats Off to The Weeders", ladies are to wear hats, the more interesting, outrageous the better!

Garden events notices:

Stenton Garden Party, May 8 from 5-7 p.m.

GC of Wilmington Garden Party/Sale (Diana Strawbridge plants), May 7 from 5-7 p.m.

Weeder business concluded, Ellie Penniman introduced our speaker, Beth Kowalchick, Chairman (and driving force) of the Committee of 1926. The Committee oversees Strawberry Mansion. To commemorate the Sesquicentennial Exhibition in 1926, a group of women created the High Street Exhibit and out of that was born the Committee of 1926. Beth showed us the history and the renovations recently made at Strawberry. The original portion of the house was built in 1789 by Judge and lawyer William Lewis, later two wings were added by the second owner, Judge Joseph Hemphill. Hemphill partnered with William Tucker in the Tucker porcelain business (examples are part of the collection at Strawberry). The Committee closed the house and commenced a five year restoration including the upgrading of the electrical system, installing geothermal heat and cooling and restoring decorative elements and painting. During the installation of the geothermal vents, it became necessary to move some of the shrubs from the front of the mansion. The plants are now placed along the Elizabeth Price Martin Azalea Path in the rear. Money from the Fertilizer Fund helped to complete this move. Other funds for the house and grounds came from the city, various individuals and groups. Following her talk, Beth took us on a tour of the house and garden.

This has been a remarkable transformation.

Respectfully submitted,

Polly Garnett, Assistant Recording Secretary