Calendar of Events: Friends Events

Monday, October 26
Regular Meeting, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
**Speaker: Dr. Jean Larson, “The Healing Power of Nature - an Introduction to Nature-based Therapeutics”**
Snyder Auditorium

Tuesday, November 10
Dessert Reception for *A Gathering of Flowers* Exhibition, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
Hosted by the Friends of AHL
**Speaker: Ursula Hargens, ceramicist & educator, Northern Clay Center**
Snyder Auditorium  (more information on p. 7)

Monday, January 25
Meeting, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
**Speaker: John Arthur, Board Member of the Minnesota Dragonfly Society, “World of Dragonflies & Damselflies”**
Snyder Auditorium

Monday, April 25
Meeting, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
**Speaker: TBD**
Snyder Auditorium

Library Exhibitions & Events

Now through Sunday, February 28, 2016
Andersen Horticultural Library
**Exhibition: A Gathering of Flowers: Botanicals in the Age of Climate Change**, an exhibition of ceramic tile work by Minnesota artist Ursula Hargens, paired with rare books. (more information on page 7)

Wednesday, March 2, 2016
**Event: Miserable Day**
Contact the library for more information or to sign up. (more information on p. 7)

Cover Image

Prairie Shooting Star (Dodecatheon meadia), Ursula Hargens, 11.5 x 9”, Earthenware clay, 2015 (right), paired with the image that inspired it - The Nodding Renealmia - from Robert Thornton's *Temple of Flora*, 1799. Part of the exhibition *A Gathering of Flowers: Botanicals in the Age of Climate Change*. Story, p. 7
Wow, where DO the weeks go? Autumn is here and its signs are everywhere. Days suggest long sleeves but nights demand fleece, trees flicker red and orange, hummingbirds are gone and humming their way to the Gulf, and a yard full of very noisy grackles cleaned out our feeders yesterday. What a great season! I hope it hangs around for awhile.

Another sign of Fall was the just-concluded Friends annual book sale. We had more books than ever this year. It took a LOT of work but the sale was very successful. I am again amazed and gratified at the level of effort our volunteers (and library staff) expend during the sale and throughout the year to pull it off. We are blessed to have such strong commitment by so many members, including those who can’t give their time, but do give support through membership and donations. And everyone is always so Friendly!

In July I was re-elected to a fourth term as your president, again without resorting to the 45-minute campaign speech I’ve threatened to give since 2009. Perhaps there’s a connection there. I realize that with a volunteer-led organization almost any warm body who hasn’t done too many embarrassing things stands a good chance of being elected, but it’s still an honor to head a group with so many good people who pitch in so readily. Perhaps the nicest thing is that when I start a letter to members with “Dear Friends”, I mean it sincerely. Thank you all for helping the FAHL to be what it is.

Okay, that’s about as serious as I can be, so on to other things. You may recall in my last Ponderings I wrote about Althea Sherman and her 1915 chimney swift tower, a replica of which had been constructed near her northeast Iowa hometown of National. Judy and I happened to be near there in May so we stopped to see it. The town no longer exists so the tower sits in a pleasant spot on a low hill beside U.S. 52, between the cemetery that harbors Sherman’s grave and a farm field. It was locked but we could listen to a recorded message from Harold Krambeer, a local fellow who was instrumental in its re-creation. A few minutes later, as we stood at Althea’s gravesite, a van pulled in. It was Harold and Deanna Krambeer coming to see if chimney swifts had arrived in the tower (not yet). So we got a personal tour and had a nice talk with them. They were pleased to run into someone who actually knew about Sherman and her tower, and I later sent them a copy of our last newsletter. They responded in kind with a copy of Althea Sherman’s Birds of an Iowa Dooryard that I had mentioned in my column as a book I would look for at future book sales. Now I don’t need to.

In July we attended a wedding in Iowa City. On our way home, with an assist from Google Earth, we found our way to an old farmstead outside the tiny hamlet of Buchanan where Sherman’s original refurbished tower now sits in a nature preserve. No one was around so we couldn’t go inside but it was memorable to see the real thing. I discovered later that my cousin’s wife from down there did the landscape plan around the tower. Very small world.

When you sit down to ponder you just never know what fun and interesting things might result.

Have a great Fall season!

[Signatures]
**Bushels of Apple Facts!**

- More than half the world’s apples are now grown in China. Most of these apples are used for apple juice and cider, marketed and sold in the U.S.
- “Only about a dozen varieties make up 90 per cent of all the apples sold in the country – and nearly half of those are Red Delicious.” (p. 39)
- The first apples originated in the forests of Kazakhstan (Tien Shan Mountains). Apple trees and their fruit made their way along a major trading route, the Silk Road, and from there spread to the Persian Empire (Middle East). When Alexander the Great conquered Persia, the fruit trees were brought to Greece.
- In 1730, the Newtown Pippin was the first commercially grown apple in the American colonies. It was the favorite apple of both Benjamin Franklin and Queen Victoria, known for its “piney flavor.”
- In 1621, James I sent the first shipment of honeybees to America (along with chickens, sheep and cows). Native Americans called the bees “white man’s flies.” The settlers planted orchards as they moved west, eventually displacing the native tribes from their land.
- Johnny Appleseed preserved apple seeds in pomace, a sticky residue from cider mills.
- Contrary to a popular poem about Johnny Appleseed (*Apple-seed John* by Lydia Marie Child), apples are not propagated by planting apple cores. The ancient method of grafting has provided a consistent fruit.
- Early colonists planted apple trees to make hard cider. In the 18th century wages were sometimes paid in hard cider.
- During Prohibition, the FBI burned some apple orchards to prevent farmers from making alcoholic cider. John D. Rockefeller’s wife, Celestia, was part of the hatchet-wielding women’s temperance brigade dedicated to destroying hard cider and alcoholic drinks in pubs and speakeasies. (The Rockefellers were fervent Baptists.)
- Stalin, who denounced genetics, prevented scientists from studying the ancient groves of Kazakhstan.
- After WWII, British scientists learned how to put apples in “suspended animation” by introducing nitrogen to displace oxygen and carbon dioxide. This led to refrigerated warehouses that could preserve apples for months.


*Apple* by Marcia Reiss (Reaktion Books, 2015) is an amazing collection of folklore, science, politics, art and merchandising of one of the most popular fruits in the world. Each chapter contains a new discovery. Did you know…

- “…the sweetest apples often have the fewest nutrients.” (p. 11)
- Apples are on the ‘Dirty Dozen’ list (annual rating of supermarkets) of fruits and vegetables with the most pesticide residue.
- Before the 1980s, arsenic and lead were sprayed to prevent disease and insect damage. (China still sprays arsenic on their apples according to a study done in 2009/10.)
- Apples give off a gas called ethylene. This causes bananas to spoil rapidly.
A penetrometer is a machine that measures apple crispness.

In 2006 the Honeycrisp (called Honeycrunch in Europe) was listed among the top 25 innovations that changed the world. The list included Google.

Dwarf varieties are used in commercial orchards. After a heavy crop, some apple varieties will bear little the following year, so pruning and fruit thinning can help produce annual crops. After a few years the exhausted trees are replaced with new ones.

The future of the apple is one of extremes between the commercially produced apples and the movement to grow antique varieties.

Apple myth and lore are deeply woven into our culture. Who has not heard of a bad apple, as American as apple pie, Johnny Appleseed, Adam and Eve’s desire to taste the forbidden fruit, Snow White and the poison apple, Apple Records, the Big Apple, Apple computers, including the Macintosh (named after the inventor’s favorite apple, the McIntosh) and the apple seller – a symbol of the Great Depression? The apple is also an ironic symbol of our desire for a simpler time. The more we depend on modern agriculture the further we get from the unique varieties that once flourished in our apple orchards and gardens.

This book is part of Reaktion Books' Botanical series. According to Reaktion the series “is the first of its kind, integrating horticultural and botanical writing with a broader account of the cultural and social impact of trees, plants and flowers. Accessibly written yet encompassing the latest scholarship, each title features around 100 fine images.” AHL has ten additional books in the series: Oak, Pine, Willow, Yew, Lily, Geranium, Bamboo, Grasses, Weeds, and another “grass” or “weed” – Cannabis. And more are being published – look for Snowdrops in June 2016. – Christine Aho

Wayne Gartland is a long-time volunteer with AHL’s book preservation group. While showing Wayne some of the treasures in the rare book room, I brought out some of these paintings and talked about the artists. Wayne’s jaw dropped and he exclaimed, “My cousin doesn’t know these are here! She just published a biography of Thomas Sadler Roberts (A Love Affair with Birds). Would you show these to her?” Wayne’s cousin, Sue Leaf, did visit and spent extensive time with the paintings. She has since published a number of articles about Emma and Agnes. The most recent, “A Tale of Two Women: The Wildflower Portfolio,” appears in the Fall 2015 issue of Minnesota History. The five-page article is followed by ten pages showcasing some of the beautifully rendered images.

The surprising link between two distinctive AHL collections? For most of her life Agnes Williams was based in New Hope, PA, as was master woodworker George Nakashima, though decades later. (more on page 7).
Full Circle

When AHL opened in 1974 no one realized seed and nursery catalogs would play an important role in answering questions from library users. When a new catalog was received the old one was offered to arboretum staff or discarded. Soon it became apparent that one of the top two things library visitors wanted to know was (and continues to be), “Where can I buy the beautiful plant I just saw on the arboretum grounds?” (The other: “Where’s the restroom?”). AHL staff used the seed and nursery catalogs to find sources for these plants.

The 1974/75 Rakestraw’s Perennial Gardens & Nursery catalog was offered to arboretum gardener Mike Heger when AHL received Rakestraw’s new catalog. Mike took the catalog home and kept it in fine condition for nearly 40 years. When he retired last year from a successful career as owner of Ambergate Gardens, this same catalog was among the thousands he donated to AHL from the rich collection he had accrued. How wonderful to have it come full circle back to the library!

Recent Catalog Purchase: 1888 Storrs & Harrison Company

In 1854 Jesse Storrs arrived in Lake County, OH, from Cortland County, NY. There he had run a small nursery for twenty years, while teaching school in the winter. Two of his sons were sent three months ahead of the family with two bushels of apple seed to start the nursery.

Newly built railroads, along with the fertile soil and favorable climate by Lake Erie, convinced Storrs it was a wonderful place to begin a nursery. He partnered with local fruit cultivator J. J. Harrison, a native of England whose family had moved to Ohio when he was a young boy.

Rather than compete, the two wisely joined forces. Storrs & Harrison Company was formed in 1858 and incorporated twenty-three years later, becoming one of the largest nurseries in the world. Harrison was the last surviving charter member of the American Association of Nurseryman (established in 1876) when he died in 1912. Storrs & Harrison closed its doors in 1940 after more than 80 years in business. --Renee Jensen

Above, a lovely example of Albert Blanc’s work: Chrysanthemum ‘Christmas Eve.’ It is described in the 1888 catalog as “a magnificent variety of the greatest beauty and excellence. Color pure snowy white; blooms very late. 15c.”
On Sunday afternoon, September 20, Friends enjoyed the beautiful day, a hearty lunch, and spending time together at the arboretum.

Our summer special event (August 4) included a delicious buffet luncheon followed by the ever informative and amusing naturalist Stan Tekiela speaking on feathers. Afterwards, Stan signed copies of his book Feathers: A Beautiful Look at a Bird’s Most Unique Feature.

2nd Annual FAHL Picnic

On Sunday afternoon, September 20, Friends enjoyed the beautiful day, a hearty lunch, and spending time together at the arboretum.

Miserable Day 2016

We plan to clean, oil, and polish the Library’s cherished Nakashima furnishings on Wednesday, March 2, 2016. Anyone wishing to share in the joy may sign up by contacting the library: (612)-301-1239 or HortLib@umn.edu. Lunch is provided.

A Gathering of Flowers Exhibition & Reception

Now through February 28, 2016

A Gathering of Flowers: Botanicals in the Age of Climate Change

Exhibition: Andersen Horticultural Library

Artist: Ursula Hargens, ceramicist & educator, Northern Clay Center

“Florilegium” can be translated from the Latin as “a gathering of flowers.” Many of you are familiar with the term in relation to published works that bring together depictions and descriptions of plants of a particular garden, such as The Highgrove Florilegium showcasing the plants of Prince Charles’s garden.

This gathering of flowers is completely different! Funded by the Minnesota State Arts Board, this exhibition pairs historical botanical illustrations from the University of Minnesota Libraries’ rare book collections with original ceramic tiles depicting endangered Minnesota wildflowers. Hargens’ colorful tile designs were inspired by, and complement, the rare book illustrations. Rare books from both the Andersen Horticultural Library and the Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine are on display.

Hargens, a 2012 McKnight Fellowship recipient, is also the founder and lead instructor of MN NICE - the Minnesota New Institute for Ceramic Education, an 8-month certificate program through the Northern Clay Center.

Dessert Reception: November 10

Snyder Auditorium: 1:30-3 pm

Friends of AHL are sponsoring a dessert reception for the Gathering of Flowers exhibition. The artist, Ursula Hargens, will speak about her work and the process of creating this exhibition. Afterwards, she will lead small groups through the library to see the artwork and rare books and answer questions. The Curator of the Wangensteen collection and the AHL Librarian will each show related rare books. We hope you can join us!

Link Between Collections (cont’d from p. 5)

All 280+ botanical watercolors by Emma Roberts and Agnes Williams have been digitized. Early next year they’ll be uploaded and available for viewing at the University Libraries’ UMedia site < umedia.lib.umn.edu/node/88869 >!
Welcome to Autumn at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum!
AHL’s Susan Moe and husband Pete created this prize-winning scarecrow, on display between the Snyder Building and Oswald Visitor Center. *SpongeBob StrawPants* is a hit with young and old alike. Visit before November to see him, as he will *not* be moving to the Library!