

2006

## Deck the Halls Chairperson Summary (What we think we learned from the experience!)

### General Notes:

#### Publicity:

GCNJ Newsleaf deadlines are July 10 and Oct 10<sup>th</sup> for listing in the calendar. (Check current dates for 2010)

Flyers were printed and handed out at Fall Conference and available at several other locations.

Bookmarks were printed and put in area stores and the library.

Newspaper articles started the first week in November.

Consider listing the Chamber of Commerce Holiday Offerings.

Channel 36 will also list coming events.

#### Houses:

Look for houses that have not been on tours before and that are architecturally different as well as different in style and size.

Easy accessibility for guests as well as workers is extremely important as well as good parking and safety on streets. Remember that there will be leaves and possibly snow to contend with.

Look for homeowners that are easy to work with.

Consider club membership when deciding on the number of homes to decorate.

#### Boutique or no boutique?

Evaluate the amount of effort vs income.

Can you make a significant amount of money by having a different type of sale?

Flower arrangements ready for pick up? Wreaths, garlands, greens?

#### Tickets/Trifold:

Should be ready for Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>.

Ticket price was raised \$5 from previous house tour.

Tickets need to be replaced every week or 2 until the last 2 weeks then should be checked daily.

700 tickets were printed and we ran out.

We did not give any comp tickets to the tour to anyone not directly involved.

Trifold listed thank-yous, our non profit status and a marking for

Shadowlawn park. (Maybe a wreath that day on the bench or a marking?)

## Deck The Halls House Tour Boutique Report

2006

The Boutique committee was chaired by Linda Winter and Linda Parker and had four additional members, chosen for their experience in crafts, sales, and marketing. The committee was asked to provide a slightly different spin on the usual boutique by focusing on selling our expertise and experience in floral and horticulture design and crafts. We looked for ways to package components and provide direction for their use.

Our first planning sessions were focused on which components would be our focus, and what other items we would have for sale. We decided to make kits for sale of O'Daptors, and of MiniDecos, with directions included. We planned to also make arrangements in assorted candlesticks using the O'Daptors, not being certain about how successful sales of just the kits would be.

The committee developed two new ideas for the sale. The first was "Porch Pots" which were decorative pots of greens and accents ready to take home and decorate a porch. ( NOTE: As the day was very cold we brought some inside and found they were equally decorative in a corner or by the fire place.) We made the bows for these from weatherproof ribbons. An assortment of greens was delivered to the Reeve House by Craig Stock. Because we were using so many in the porch pots he made an additional delivery during the week. The other creation was "Banister Bows" which were conceived as large multi-material bows for accenting the newell posts of stair banisters as well as to hang on interior doors instead of a wreath, or to hang in windows. They were all made of several varieties of ribbons with focus pieces of gilded pods, leaves, pinecones, colored wires, decorative ornaments, bells, beads, feathers, glittery pieces, some ribbons made from paper and made from copies of sheet music. A gold cord was attached at the back to fit around the newell post. They became individual creations that were truly works of art.

During the fall the horticulture committee had made hypertufa containers and made about 10 extra for us. We bought and dug up hens-and-chickens plants and potted them up in the containers. They were decorated with ribbons and an accent ornament. We had a donation of four African Violet pots which we filled with new plants. A dozen or more planters had been made using pressed lamb's ears on green painted cans, and we filled those with small poinsettias and bows.

We had the new Well Seasoned cookbook for sale at the boutique and sold 70 books that day.

The final week we made and decorated 6 table top boxwood trees and four tea cup boxwood trees. We made about 30 arrangements in candlesticks using O'Daptors. We had 2 sets of red napkins with a snowball on one corner in snowflake napkin rings. Three of the houses donated a selection of hand made tree ornaments that they had used in their houses. The fourth house ended up needing all of their ornaments for their tree. We had eight plastic luminaries decorated with snowflakes. We had 12 each of kits of O'Daptors and Minidecos. There were additional small arrangements and gift items.

The Celebrate the Season Boutique was held at the Reeve House on Mountain Ave. this year. The Historic Society had just received their permits to open to the public and we were their first event. There was no furniture in the living room and the library so we set up 7-8 long tables and several card tables along with a coat rack and a coat

## Deck The Halls House Tour Boutique Report

stand to display the items for sale. In addition there was one table and the porch pots on the outside porch.

We decorated the house with roping on the outside railings and a large Banister Bow on the front door, and two porch pots (for sale) on either side of the front door. Inside we provided a few small greens and ribbon accents for the dining room and the kitchen for a festive accent. Outside on the grass we spread a drop cloth and made piles of different greens. Shoppers could buy a length of twine for \$3 and tie it around as many greens as they could fit. We ran out of twine and sold as many as they could get their arms around for the same price. That item was a big hit and only cost the twine.

Our gross sales were \$4254.50. Our expenses were \$908.13. Our net profit was \$3346.37.

### **Evaluation**

There were several factors that affected our sales. We had asked each house to feature arrangements using O'Daptors, to use MiniDecos, and to showcase the cookbooks. Every house had some kind of a porch pot outside the front or back door. By the time many of the tour reached the Boutique they were looking for the cookbooks and the O'Daptors kits. We sold out all of the kits halfway through the tour and there were some sales of arrangements to get the O'Daptors! Shoppers were interested in the ornaments that they had seen in the houses and they were priced to sell. We had to adjust the prices of the porch pots and banister bows during the morning as we had slightly overpriced them. As these were new items we had estimated our prices and adjusted them to improve sales. After that change the bows especially sold very well. The women working the floor were very enthusiastic and helpful to the shoppers.

In evaluating the Boutique we could have sold twice as many kits, boxwood trees and tea cup trees as we had, and we should have had only 12 porch pots. The candlestick arrangements were well received except shoppers were concerned about the fresh flowers lasting. For another sale we would recommend using fresh greens and non-floral accents like beads, ornaments, candy canes, ribbons so the arrangements would be festive and glitzy and would last the entire season.

Linda Parker

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RESULTS OF MEETING ON NOVEMBER 12, 1990

- \* I. THIS WAS RECOMMENDED AS A POLICY TO BE FOLLOWED IN EACH SUCCEEDING HOUSE TOUR: *There should be uniformity in leaving decorations in the host home. What should stay:*
- a. *all garland*
  - b. *main tree*
  - c. *front door wreath (or swag or whatever treatment)*
  - d. *fresh flower arrangements*

(If hostess does not want these items, then they are to be removed).

Poinsettias, other wreaths, other trees, all other decorations ... can be purchased. The homeowner will have first choice for purchase (at cost); otherwise, the membership and touring public can purchase items.

\* (or something of equal value per house)

## IDEAS THAT WORKED WELL - RECOMMENDED TO CONTINUE

1. Keep the boutique/refreshment area separate from the tour houses. There was so much more space to display items, to serve refreshments (without the worry of ruining someone's carpet) and more adequate parking spots. Additionally, people had a chance to see an exquisite church with beautiful decorations.
2. If possible, retain a church on the tour. It enhanced the holiday season tour.
3. In addition to Rorden's, retain Jeanette's store as an outlet for our ticket distribution. They sold so many tickets for us!!
4. The plastic runners for the houses were borrowed from the Symphony Guild. (The Garden Club offered us red carpet runners as well).  
Check with them again. However, if the plastic runners are used, remind house chairs that the runners, if not used on carpeting, must be turned upside down so as not to damage wood floors or vinyl linoleum with the little spiked protuberances.
5. Workshops were held not only for the boutique items, but also for preparing the "tea sandwiches" for the refreshments. It made the food preparation much easier.
6. Postcard notices were sent continuously to alert committees of meetings, and to remind the membership of their duties (workshops, which houses they had signed up to hostess for, the shift hours they were to work, etc.). This worked out well, but it may be a good idea to allocate some monies for this next time around.
7. At the Myers' house, we had Christmas music playing softly in the background all during the house tour. The public commented on how nice and festive this was. Perhaps all the houses on the tour could do this the next time. (It also made it nicer for the hostesses all day).

~~232-3686~~

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BOUTIQUE COMMITTEE REPORT L(())1990

The boutique seem to come to-gether like a puzzle:- sewing items, arrangements, food, wreath, crafts, ornaments and workers from everywhere.

Perhaps it would help to know who was on the committee, what was the experience of previous butiques. I should have had more workshops early especially ornaments as we could have many more of them.

The things that sold well were stuff animals and scrfs, gold sprayed deers, simply sprays, dry arrangements in a basket. As the day went on the things that were passed over were picked up. Other things may have sold better if they had been presented ~~into~~ into a Xmas look. Also grouping of them as the items sold.

The First day we set up and priced item. Pricing was hard since we were not experience in what things were worth. ...

The Second day was the sale. The crowd was heavy. Perhaps it could be a limit as to how many were allowed in. Left overs were Pine wreath, food, dry wreath (too summer and autumn looking).

Nite We cleaned up until 9 PM. We did not know what to do with the waste so we took many bags of them home.

CHAIRPERSON

Judith Kampe

## **FLOWER SHOW REPORT**

**April 28, 2017 "A Victorian Spring"**

**Chair Diana Kazazis**

The spring flower show was a success highlighting all the opulence of Victorian splendor. It was held in the Presbyterian Church Assembly hall again utilizing the Robinson room for a new idea from Diana K., the educational presentations and also used for the Judges' breakfast and luncheon, organized by Pat Wilson, Jeannie Pelikan and Carole Smillie. Alice Cowell's team staged the front door and entry with beautiful baby's breath wreaths and likewise adorned shrubs. Inside she borrowed an archway, which she fitted out with garlands and hydrangea with Victorian wicker planters with lilacs galore. Signage was at the door with the schedule of events.

Price was \$15 prior to and \$20 at the door. Being that it was in one location, I saw a need for "value added" and thought that bringing in guest speakers would provide that extra. There was a craft boutique and tea, which was an additional \$10 cost and provided tea, sandwiches and dessert. Again, it was staged with each part of the show in a separate alcove. This seems to work well for us.

Each member was to sell 3 tickets, made \$5330. Income from boutique was \$2469, tea sales \$1,425. Donations and patrons \$990. Total income of \$10,214. Minus expenses of \$4350, net profit actual was \$5863.18. Projected budget and actual expenses were very close, see budget. Subsequent to the show Joe DaRold and Diana Kazazis wrote the Book of Evidence to submit for a flower show award when the show received over 95 points from the evaluating judges.

### **STAGING**

Beth Siano was staging chair and did an unbelievable job considering the difficult circumstances of losing her husband. Diana came up with the idea of asking an antique dealer, Winterhill Antiques, to loan items to the show, which would enhance our Victorian theme. We obtained pedestals and silver candlebras, which showcased our "Wedding" class in design staged on a lace covered banquet table. Colored tablecloths designated specific areas of interest ie dark pink for boutique, green for horticulture. Williams Nursery and Union County College greenhouse provided planters of shrubs. Properties were borrowed from GCNJ and three new photo displays were constructed by Bob Partridge and John Kazazis. This was a system of railings so that pictures could be switched around into different groupings with ease. We used a gray, well-lit niche from GCNJ for the miniatures. Youth also participated and provided hort., design and artistic crafts.

### **POSTERS etc.**

Ing Bossert was responsible for creating the cover of the schedule, mainly written by Diana, which then translated into the same image used in her street signs, posters, tickets and bookmarks for the show. Thirty street signs were placed around town. Joe DaRold made a donation of printing for the bookmarks which were placed in 11 local libraries.

### **JUDGES HOSPITALITY**

Jeannie Pelikan prepared 14 box lunches with sandwich, water, green salad, health bar and cookies. Nine judges, RH president, Judges chair and vice chairs with one extra for total cost of \$150 for food. Gifts for the judges were extra.

### **ARTISTIC CRAFTS**

Nancy Smith was the consultant for the four classes, decorated fans, brooches, bracelets, hats and tussie mussies.

\* Note- The tussie mussies were not decorated but purchased and filled with flowers. This does not constitute an artistic craft as nothing was decorated. However, judges did not make mention of it.

### **FLOWER DESIGN**

Barbara Mullin was the design chair and provided direction and workshops for the designers. She guided our novice member on her miniature, which then won the overall Design of Excellence award, Nina Sylvester. All four entries for the wedding class were on one table. There was discussion that the ends would be more desirable for exhibitors but in the end, those who exhibited on the inside of the table did not mind. All table artistry entries were awarded 90plus as they were all so excellent. The candlebras were added AFTER judging for the public's delight.

### **HORTICULTURE**

Clare Minick and Barbara Spellmeyer chaired the hort. classes. They came up with an original idea of the using Wardian cases so popular during Victorian era, terrariums and cloches. There were many entries for these but cut plant material was lacking. We did not make entering hort. mandatory and we suffered for it having only 84 pieces in total, but all classes filled. The chairs provided great information at general meetings on how to prepare plants for entry and also wrote articles for the newsletter as well. They also wrote their portion of the schedule and provided unique class names and descriptions.

\*Note- Chairs do not recommend a mandatory requirement from each member but prefer quality over quantity. Unfortunately, that's not how the judges saw it and we were penalized for minimum entries. Also note that the past two flower shows have been in April and there was adequate plant material at this time of year.

### **VICTORIAN TEA**

Chaired by Gayle Lechner and Mary Smith, they provided teapot and flower centerpieces and food made by their committee members. The hostesses were attired in aprons. They borrowed some 90 glass dishes with teacups from Hetfield House and cleaned before returned. They had five 10 seat tables with tablecloths, a podium to direct customers and separate tickets which were sold at the entry door, not at the lectern.

\*Notes - \$10 seemed to high a cost for the amount of food supplied. The \$10 for tea cost should be revisited if we do this again. The show prior charged \$3 and that was too little because it was a buffet where customers could take as much as they wanted. This was a set amount for a larger price.

There also were leftovers, so maybe a control of amount situation? Tickets for the show did not indicate extra cost for luncheon, which caused problems. Tickets sold at entry instead at lectern also posed issues. Food supplied by committee was not uniform in size and this also



caused issues in customers comparing what they received. The chairs indicated that there needs to be more members for this committee although they did have at least nine.

### BOUTIQUE

Chaired by Tracy Criscitiello and Colleen Schmidt, and selected members Nancy Smith and Pat Badala. This was the core -working group and they opened up workshops to the membership to help make items on several occasions. Some of the craft products did not move well, such as the Steam punk boxes which were very labor intensive for the group to make and the beetles mounted to decorative plaques. Quickly moving items included plants hanging and in containers or boxes. These core four were able to man the boutique area for the entire time of selling. Leftover crafts were sold at general meetings to follow.

\*Note – Demographics of a flower show lean towards older women who in retirement, are not collecting crafts much. It seems that selling live plant material are better sellers and recommend that to the next boutique show. Some items that went fast may have been able to be priced higher and viceversa, those that sold slowly may have needed lower pricing.

### TUTORIALS

A new idea for our shows, Diana instituted these educational presentations. Joe DaRold and Plainfield library archivist provided 2 presentations on Victorian photography, Diana Kazazis provided two presentations on the Art of Quilling, Barbara Mullin provided 2 on floral designs, and we had an outside person, historian Laurie Gulke, provide customs from the Victorian era. Presentations started at 2:00 and ran til 6:00, half hour each with no breaks in between. Each presenter received a gift of tea and jam and each "show" offered a door prize, which served as impetus to get folks in the door and as an extension of the presentation ie. quilling items were given as door prizes for that show. Diana stayed exclusively with the presenters and Kris Luka went to the main room to announce each show every half hour and distributed door show tickets at the door. Some customers were there for all of the presentations!

\*Note - This schedule was grueling and left no time would there have been issues. Luckily all went smoothly, but for the future, I would put in 10 minutes at least between presentations. Since it was better attended than expected, be sure to have more chairs on hand to put up quickly as we had to do.

### TICKETS

Liz Dwyer, an associate! stepped up to handle tickets and sales. Diana provided wristbands for customers at the door so that customers could move around the church rooms from one to another with us knowing that they have paid. This worked out well but sometimes cumbersome if line was long.

\*Note- When using wrist bands, have a separate person attaching so line can move along. Get ticket and band, go to another person to attach. This committee agreed that the tea tickets should not have been sold at the door with the entry ticket, but should have been sold separately at the entrance to the tea.

### DOCENTS

Rich Pelikan was the chair and arranged a schedule, which provided adequate coverage for the show.

## JUDGES

Hosted by Kay Cross who contacted and entertained nine judges for the show. Bob Geremia was the judge for the photography section.

## SPECIAL EXHIBITS

Very exciting exhibits by Barbara Mullin for tea, Diana Kazazis for pollinators, Joe DaRold for Victorian photography and the best, Diane Genco's display of Victorian ephemera complete with wedding dress on a mannequin. Beautiful and enhanced the show tremendously. Always have educational displays!

## YOUTH

Chaired by Alice Cowell, the girls provided a wonderful display of horticulture tussie mussies, floral designs from children's books and botanical art.

Others - Clerks chair Beth Hanscom, Publicity Paula Long, Photography chair Margot Partridge, Printing Barbara Murphy, Judges Breakfast Carole Smillie, Awards Diana Kazazis, Name tags from Maryann Pietruski were over the top gorgeous!!

## FLOWER SHOW CHAIR COMMENTS

**Flower Show Evaluation** - The Book of Evidence is a meticulous, tedious, time consuming project as a wrap up to the show that essentially has to be done by the chair of the show as she has the most knowledge of all aspects. This chair questions the reason of actually having the show evaluated as when scoring 95, one must write up the BOE. Presenting a BOE does not necessarily result in winning awards for the Club either. It's very easy to "decide" to have the show evaluated if one is not actually doing the work of the BOE. Perhaps one could have the show evaluated and NOT have to submit a BOE? Perhaps GCNJ should consider this.

I do believe that the flower show is more labor intensive than is the Deck the Halls tour for each member. We did make over \$5000 this show but perhaps there is a different way to fundraise and make equivalent profit. Although, continuing some form of flower show is a necessity for the Club in my opinion.

# *Tutorial Schedule*

<i>Presentation and Door Prizes</i>	<i>Time</i>
<p><i>Floral Creations</i></p> <p><b>Barbara Mullin, past President of Garden Club of NJ</b> Traditional floral design using materials from the garden supplemented with inexpensive purchased flowers</p>	<p>2:00pm</p> <p>4:30pm</p>
<p><i>Victorian Photography</i></p> <p><b>Sarah Hull, M.A., M.L.S., Archivist, Head of Local History, Genealogy and Special Collections, Plainfield Public Library</b></p> <p><b>Joe Da Rold, M.L.S., Executive Director, Retired, Plainfield Public Library</b> "From Victorian Lady to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Woman" Presentation about a Victorian photographer, Reina Lawrence, from Central Jersey who specialized in floral photography</p>	<p>2:30pm</p> <p>5:00pm</p>
<p><i>Victorian Whimsie, Dress and Customs</i></p> <p><b>Laurie Gaulke, Historical actress, M.A. Cultural Anthropology</b> Explore the nuances of Victorian manners and fashion in a delightful, informative romp through Queen Victoria's England</p>	<p>3:00pm</p> <p>4:00pm</p>
<p><i>The Art of Quilling</i></p> <p><b>Diana Kazazis, President of the Rake and Hoe Garden Club</b> Learn about the history of quilling and how to create your own designs</p>	<p>3:30pm</p> <p>5:30pm</p>