~ MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT ~

MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2010, 6-8 PM

BRENDAN KENNEY will speak on

Hermann von Pückler-Muskau: His Gardens and Influence

A pergola commemorates Pückler-Muskau’s love affair with the opera singer, Henriette Sontag. The viper at top indicates its aftermath.

Brendan Kenney has been a member of the Manhattan Chapter of NARGS for 16 years. He founded a non-profit in a community garden, 6BC Botanical Garden, and was involved in community gardening in New York for 18 years. An early interest in the intersection of German, Slavic, and Jewish culture in Central Europe led him to the discovery of the life and work of Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau, one of the most original and eccentric people in history. Frequenting the salon of Rahel Varnhagen von Ense (née Levin) in Berlin, Prince Pückler, (1785-1871) with estates at Muskau and Branitz in Lusatia, (the homeland of the Sorbs) is a prime example of this rich culture.

MEETING LOCATION: THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, 148 WEST 37TH STREET, 13TH FL.
Our new meeting place is conveniently located in midtown Manhattan, between 7th Avenue and Broadway, near the 7th Avenue #1/2/3 lines and the 6th Avenue B/D/F subway lines. It is located three blocks north of Macy’s and not far from Grand Central, Penn Station and the Port Authority Bus Terminal.
MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2010, 6-8 PM

LOLA HORWITZ will speak on

Love It and Leave It, Maybe

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Love It and Leave It, Maybe

Lola Horwitz in her Warwick, New York garden, mid-1980s

Lola Lloyd Horwitz grew up surrounded by a suburban Illinois garden where her mother took pride in the increasing number of winter aconites and native trilliums ‘rescued’ from developers’ bulldozers in the nearby Skokie Lagoons. Lola’s Brooklyn and Warwick gardens are both rich in these two species, thanks to transplanting efforts instituted just before her parents moved East.

Lola spent 25 years teaching piano and exploring a challenging repertoire, but has settled into gardening as her primary focus; designing and maintaining gardens in Brooklyn and consulting in her daughter’s green roof business, Alive Structures. She was the last Chairperson of the Manhattan Chapter and has served on the NARGS Board of Directors.

“Love It and Leave It, Maybe” will describe the 27 years of changes and additions made to the open landscape surrounding she and husband Donald created at their 19th century farmhouse in Warwick, NY. The intimate knowledge gleaned from planting innumerable trees, shrubs and perennials, making innumerable mistakes, and getting it right, often by serendipity, will be the focus of her talk.

Please join us for our February meeting to hear this very special speaker, and remember our new meeting place at THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, 148 WEST 37th STREET, 13th FLOOR, between 7th Avenue and Broadway, near the 7th Avenue #1/2/3 lines and the 6th Avenue B/D/F subway lines. It is three blocks north of Macy’s and not far from Grand Central, Penn Station and the Port Authority Bus Terminal.
It is a bit redundant to announce that “Spring Has Sprung” to a group of gardeners. You all sense and instinctively know it, long before anyone else. However, I must say that Internet communication does tend to cloud the concept a bit, when in February, my friend in Vancouver was mowing his lawn during the Olympics, Abbie was telling me about the Eranthis blooming on her terrace, and my friend Gail in Northern Canada reported that there were ONLY three feet of snow remaining in her garden, and it was still safe to drive on the lake. I took to my own backyard (rooftop troughs and tree pits) to find evidence of swelling buds and green shoots and remembered, as a child, my delight at finding the fresh red peony shoots under the mounds of leaves that covered the flower beds. It helps the advent to visit the Philadelphia Flower Show where EVERYTHING is in bloom each March. The Horticultural Competition was better than ever this year, with hundreds of blooming Primula and bulbs. We judged a special class of plants from China, Japan and Korea that included some very special cultivars of Asarum and the blue ribbon went to Epimedium epsteinii (thanks Harold). Tom Stuart was there judging ferns and clivia as well as Priscilla Twombly and Kate Jamison and ... a good time was had by all.

Our friend Peggy Bowditch entered a flowering Haberea rhodopensis in the Gesneriad class and John Ray won Best of Day for his trough garden with nicely established plants growing and blooming in tufa in a nicely designed large oval trough. I am busy doing a lot of orchid shows this spring, mostly here in the Northeast and Canada, so my sense of warming comes and goes with the latitude. What I do know for sure, is that it is time to have already planted my seed from NARGS Seed Exchange and to prepare for the planting of all that saved seed of Heirloom Tomatoes and assorted other seed. I have only one quart remaining in my freezer of Amy’s Tomato Soup and I am saving it for a special occasion. Lola Horwitz couldn’t wait for spring, so she went trekking off to the Mediterranean to climb the Atlas Mountains, in search of Narcissus and other rare plants. I’m sure that she is having an exciting time and we hope she makes it back in time to speak at our April meeting. Meanwhile Co-chair, Colta Ives, is busily preparing for our Spring Plant Sale. Pot up those extra plants to share with us in May please.

~ WHY DON'T YOU? ~

~ Set the seed pots that need cold stratification outside ASAP, if you haven’t yet? Cover the flats with hardware cloth to prevent squirrels from digging in the pots if they’re a problem.

~ Undertake a thorough garden cleanup early this year? Begin pruning trees and shrubs for form before the leaves appear, but not too early with the sap-heavy maples and birches, remove tenacious perennial weeds while the ground is still soft enough to pull them easily, transplant and divide, renew mulches, and dig new beds while spring is new and exciting.

~ Resolve to plant more of the earliest blooming rock garden and woodland plants, like Townsendia rothrockii, Aethionema oppositifolia, Hepatica americana, Adonis amurensis, and Draba rigida to enrich and extend your bloom season.

{STEVE WHITESELL is pushing back snow to look for the Galanthus elwesii blooming underneath, hoping to find more than expected and more signs of life with them.}
What intriguing disasters can befall a garden! Divided between two countries, the Muskauer Park in the Upper Lusatia region of Germany has been undergoing a challenging restoration the past several years which involves the cooperation of Poland and Germany. Two-thirds of the over 2050 acre garden is Polish territory while the remainder on the left bank of the Neisse River, including the town of Muskau, remains part of Germany.

Long fascinated by the historical German self-perception as a people in the woods and the integration of parks and the urban landscape in that country, in 2007 I traveled to eastern Germany and visited the personal parks of Herman von Pückler-Muskau at Muskau and Branitz as well as his commissioned efforts at Babelsberg and Kleine Glienicke amongst many other gardens. The Gartenreich surrounding Dessau which includes Wörlitz and the gardens at Potsdam which include Sanssouci integrate town and landscape in an enchanting manner; but Pückler-Muskau’s skill and vision envelop the town of Muskau making it truly a part of the surrounding park. The naturalistic Muskau landscape was much admired by Charles Eliot, Samuel Parsons Jr., Henry Vincent Hubbard, Alfred Rehder, Adolf Strauch and George Kessler; which had a significant impact on the design of American parks, cemeteries and urban landscapes in the 19th and early 20th century.

As with all great garden books timeless wisdom is contained within Andeutung über Landschaftsgärtnerie (Hints on Landscape Gardening) – Hermann von Pückler-Muskau’s detailed explanation of his garden ideas and future plans for his park at Muskau. The laying of paths, expert use of shade, reflections in water and the grouping of trees of varying hues and texture mark his concepts which took the third generation of ideas after William Kent, Capability Brown and Humphry Repton to a culmination. He was not an original thinker, but skillfully took English picturesque garden concepts and adapted them to local conditions. In fact, his estate at Muskau was an unlikely prospect for a great landscape garden. The sandy soil, natural conifers, swampy areas and industry in the valley of the Neisse River proved to require large sums of money and the labor of 200 men who from 1816 began the transformation. The existence of detailed plans in his book (1834) - though written in 1825, sympathetic subsequent owners and the continuity of head gardeners (later park directors) i.e. Jacob Rehder (1817-1852) followed by Eduard Petzold (1852-1878) allowed the park to continue its development after it was sold in 1845. Petzold had moved to Muskau as a child and began studying and working in the garden in 1831.

During the tour of the Muskauer Park which I had arranged I was delighted to discover that Peter, my guide, had studied under a student of Petzold. Having visited the extensive tacky Polish market on the Polish side of the garden the day before the problems of international cooperation were quite evident as Peter explained that the history of the forestry school on the Polish side needed to be respected. Starting at the New Castle we enjoyed views over the garden and then continued on the perfectly laid paths to what proved to be a 6 ½ hour tour. Crossing the so-called doublebridge to the Polish side of the garden required the showing of passports to a German officer at one end and a Polish officer at the other end. The absurdity of a customs crossing at a wooden footbridge in the middle of a garden ceased at the end of 2007 when Poland joined the Schengen (customs-free) area of Europe.

Branitz offers a more intact picture of Pückler’s vision, though in contrast this estate garden does not encompass a town. At the age of 60 he began a new landscape garden on a site more challenging than at Muskau. The sandy, flat site in Lower Lusatia is bisected by the Spree River. Until his death in 1871 he toiled to create another masterwork. Oddly, he had never visited his father’s ancestral estate prior to moving there in 1845 and came to regret having had the mature trees moved to Muskau. In England he had learned the secrets of transplanting mature trees even when in flower. He soon had scoured the local countryside and found many mature trees to buy and transport to his new park as he had done at Muskau. His innovation of earthen pyramids, a land pyramid and a lake pyramid, provide elevation to the otherwise flat terrain with the latter serving as his stunning final resting place. Pückler had elaborate plans for his internment, which included a symbolic boat ride to the mid-lake pyramid, but as with many a gardener’s plans it was not to be as the lake was frozen when he died in early February.

In his lifetime he offered advice on the design of many gardens. Park Babelsberg was his greatest achievement beyond Muskau and Branitz. After initial work by his rival Peter Joseph Lennè, Pückler was given the commission by the future Wilhelm I to create a landscape garden surrounding the neo-Gothic Babelsberg Palace (Karl Friedrich Schinkel 1833). The hill site includes panoramic views of the many lakes surrounding the Havel River and overlooks Kleine Glienicke where Pückler added man-made lakes to his rival’s work. Here the contrasting of single specimens and grouping of trees is used to great effect with the reflected light from the water.

Through the impact of German immigrants such as Alfred Rehder (the grandson of Jacob Rehder) who worked at the Arnold Arboretum for 42 years, Adolf Strauch and George Kessler and influential Americans who made pilgrimages to Muskau, Pückler’s design concepts had a major impact in the United States. In 1906 Samuel Parsons Jr. spent three days exploring Muskau and praised it in The Art of Landscape Architecture (1915). Charles Eliot sent by Olmsted & Olmsted visited in 1886 and later wrote Muskau – a German Country Park published in Garden and Forest in 1891. Much praise
for Pückler-Muskau by Henry Vincent Hubbard is found in An Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design (1917, Hubbard & Kimbell), a standard text for landscape architecture students for many years. Visiting Spring Grove cemetery at Cincinnati last September was a revelation for me. The cemetery and arboretum was designed by Adolf Strauch from 1855 utilizing the prince’s concepts to create a new idea: the lawn cemetery. The pleasant practicality of a cemetery as a beautiful landscape park offers an alternative for the cost of garden upkeep. The lack of upright headstones and fences maintains the park like setting. Among the magnificent trees are 21 state and 2 national champions. In the fall of 2007 I was delighted to discover a Pücklerschlag (Pueckler Cut) at Locust Grove in Poughkeepsie. A long narrow cut through trees which steals a distant view is an instantly recognizable feature which Pückler first used at Ettersburg with the assistance of Petzold. Viewing the Hudson River and distant Catskills through the forest is essential to this delightful landscape, which includes an impressive collection of 19th century cast iron garden benches and urns. George Kessler, influenced by Pückler’s ideas, created Park and Boulevard Plans for Kansas City (1893), Cincinnati (1907), and Indianapolis (1908) among other cities as well parks and cemeteries influenced by Strauch. Born in a hospital on Fall Creek Parkway in Indianapolis, my first vision of the outside world was a Kessler-designed landscape.

As a true gardener Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau once declared that his garden was his heart. In an important sense he remains with us in his landscapes, which continue to inspire. Muskau awaits its pilgrims as the difficult negotiations of the heart continue.

Selected Bibliography:

- Gröning, Gert, Pückler und Amerika, Stadt und Grün, Jg. 52, Nr. 7, 2003, Seite 49-55.
- http://georgekessler.org

{BRENDAN KENNEY provided this preview of his upcoming talk to the Manhattan Chapter on Monday, March 22, 2010.}
~ THANK YOU, LARRY THOMAS ~

When I started propagating Daphne, shortly after I retired in 1995, Larry Thomas encouraged me to specialize in this wonderful genus. Eventually, Larry suggested that I put together a Daphne talk for the New York Chapter. I told him I didn’t think I could do that on my own, but if I could convince Darrell Trout, a fellow Daphophile, to do the talk with me, I would consider it.

Darrell and I put together a program, and on one nasty, miserable night in February, with the scent of *Daphne odora* *v. marginata* perfuming the car, we drove into Manhattan and gave our first Daphne talk together. Larry said it was the best Daphne talk he’d ever heard (possibly it was the only one, but we appreciated the compliment), and suggested we take it on the road. He said he’d promote us to other chapters. Eventually, Darrell and I spoke to every chapter in the Northeast, as well as to groups in Canada and Michigan. We also gave several classes at the New York Botanical Garden.

In 1999, we decided to form the Daphne Society. Needless to say, Larry was present at the charter meeting. Eventually, we had members in twelve countries. We held several meetings a year at the New York Botanical Garden or Planting Fields Arboretum, and Larry attended every one. The Daphne Society, with the help and hard work of so many dedicated members, flourished for seven years and did much to raise awareness of and interest in this fascinating genus. It is fair to say that it may never have existed at all had Larry not gently nudged me into becoming more involved with Daphnes. For this, Darrell and I thank you, Larry.

{JOHN BIEBER is the co-founder of the late, lamented Daphne Society and a longtime member, friend, and supporter of the Manhattan Chapter. His garden is filled with choice species, hybrids, and varieties of Daphne, as well as select Cyclamen, Hellebores, and other choice plants.}

POSTSCRIPT BY LARRY THOMAS: Thank you, John, for becoming our Grand Guru of Daphnephilia, and for spreading not only the word, but the plants as well. Your plant introductions of this beautiful genus have enriched us all. Many of them from UK sources had never been available to American horticulture before. You and Darrell led the way.

Attendance at a meeting of the Daphne Society, held at Planting Fields Arboretum in 1999. Attendees included Joanne and Fred Knapp, Lew Panica, Dr. Phil Waldman, Dr. Nick Nickou, Dennis Stewart, Larry Thomas, Shelley Herlich, Wilma and Al Wassner, Yetta and Hy Levine, Andreas Dombowski, Ken Twombley, Darrell Trout, Joyce Fingerut, Vinnie Simeone, John Bieber, John and Barbara Makley, and Bob Bartolomei.
While assembling the plant list and locating nursery sources for spring planting in the Alpine Garden at Fort Tryon Park, a light bulb went off in my head. Why not ask my fellow rock gardeners to join me in the planting? Manhattan Chapter members have years of experience in selecting the best locations for these species and providing the plants with the proper planting practices they require to successfully establish. I hope everyone reading this can devote time to reclaiming this historic garden and help make this dream a living and thriving reality. A previous newsletter contained an article entitled ‘Restoration of the Alpine Garden at Fort Tryon Park’ (Volume 22, Issue 1, January/February 2009) describing plans for restoration of the garden. This will be the first phase of replanting, following a year devoted to extensive removal of invasive trees, shrubs, and vines that had hidden the rockwork for decades while the garden lay fallow. Eventually the garden will be returned to its former glory, and you can help!

The site selected for planting this spring is an east-facing slope with several rock terraces constructed in the 1930s in accordance with the plans of the Olmsted Brothers firm for John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Light conditions vary from morning sun exposure, bright filtered light under a high tree canopy, to dimly lit areas under dense tree canopies.

Plants listed below are derived from the master plant list, and I hope some members will have divisions they can contribute to the planting effort. If you have any of these plants, or others suitable for a large-scale rock and woodland garden plants in your collection and would like to contribute spring divisions or donate plants grown from the NARGS seed exchange program, please email me at kean.eng@parks.nyc.gov or call me at the phone number listed in the chapter officer’s contact section of this newsletter. Donations will be accepted throughout April and a planting day will be scheduled in early May. If you let me know of your interest in donating plants and/or helping with planting, please contact me and I’ll reply with the specific dates. Thank you for helping make this project a success.

Actaea rubra  Aquilegia canadensis  ‘Little Lantern’
Corydalis ochroleuca  Haberlea rhodopensis  Jeffersonia diphylla
Mitchella repens  Sanguinaria canadensis  Thalictrum kiusianum

Agilelea flabellata (Cameo series)  Asarina procumbens  Corydalis bracteata
Corydalis solida  Hacquetia epipactis  Jeffersonia dubia
Mukdenia rossii  Saxifraga stolonifera  Vancouveria hexandra

Anemonella thalictroides (white, pink)  Corydalis ambigua  Corydalis lutea
Corydalis x allienii  Iris gracilipes  Miranthes (Saxifraga) virginiensis
Ramonda myconi  Shortia galacifolia

{KEN TECK ENG is the gardener in charge of the Alpine Garden restoration for the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation and a member of the Manhattan Chapter, currently serving as Treasurer.}
Join us March 19-21, 2010 in Devens, Massachusetts to hear about terrific new plants for your garden; learn design principles you can use to make your garden more interesting and pleasing; buy great plants; enter a plant show; and mingle with other obsessed gardeners. Devens, Massachusetts is the new town on the site of the former Fort Devens, 30 miles west of Boston.

For further information, check out the NARGS website www.nargs.org or contact Registrar Vivien Bouffard ewsregistration@msn.com or, Chair Rosemary Monahan (rosemonahan@comcast.net or 978-568-1780).

{Editorial note: The Manhattan Chapter and NARGS award stipends to members who have never previously attended a National NARGS meeting. Chapter members interested in applying for the stipends should speak with Michael Riley about the specific criteria for grants.}

~ 2010 CALENDAR EVENTS ~

Monday, March 22 – MCNARGS Meeting at HSNY: BRENDAN KENNEY, Hermann von Pückler-Muskau: His Gardens and Influence

Wednesday April 7, 14, and 21, 5-7 pm CREATE A ROCK GARDEN THAT ROCKS with the Curator of the NYBG Rock Garden – JODY PAYNE (MCNARGS member) A successful rock garden creates special habitats and uses a variety of plants such as alpines, bulbs, perennials, and shrubs. Learn how to design, site, and construct your own rock garden and how to plant and maintain it. One of the classes will include a visit to the Botanical Garden’s Rock Garden. $145/$131 NYBG Members, Classroom Hours: 6. Call 718.817-8747 for details.

Saturday, April 17 – Wave Hill, ALPINE TROUGH DAY – Alpine troughs function as miniature, self-contained rock gardens. These rustic containers display a variety of diminutive alpine plants in a small amount of space. Trough enthusiast and renowned plantsman Dave Culp joins Assistant Director of Public Programs Laurel Rimmer to instruct participants in the art of cultivating plants in handmade troughs. Children ages 12 and up welcome with an adult. 10am – Make an Alpine Trough: Mix up a batch of ‘hypertufa’ and craft a small round trough to take home. Member $15/Non-member $20. Registration required. Drop-ins welcome as supplies last. 1pm – Alpine Trough Walk – Get inspired by the unique collection of alpine plants artfully arranged in the troughs at the T.H. Everett Alpine House. Free. 2pm – Plant an Alpine Trough: Using a pre-made trough, select from a variety of alpine plants and create a miniature landscape for your garden, deck or terrace. Member $30/Non-member $45. Registration required. Drop-ins welcome as supplies last.

Monday, April 19 – MCNARGS Meeting at HSNY: LOLA L. HORWITZ, Love It and Leave It, Maybe


Saturday, April 24th & Sunday, April 25th: Plant Sale & Earth Day Celebration at Leonard J. Buck Garden: (April 24, 10am-5pm); April 25 (12pm-5pm), http://www.nargs.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=105:watnong-chapter&catid=36:chapter-stuff&Itemid=110

Sunday, May 2 – MCNARGS Spring Plant Sale – 10am to 1pm, El Sol Brillante community garden, 522-528 East 12th Street between Avenues A and B (Subway L station at 1st Avenue and 14th Street)
~ MCNARG’S SPRING PLANT SALE ☀ El Sol Brillante ~
Sunday May 2, 2010
522-528 East 12th Street between Avenues A and B
(Subway L station at 1st Avenue and 14th Street)
10am - 1pm

~ SHARE your own special home-grown plant stock!
~ PURCHASE fresh, new specimens to revitalize your precious green plot!
~ SUPPORT a great fundraising event for your NARGS Manhattan Chapter!

MCNARG’s Annual Spring Plant Sale comes up soon, in a new location and in a new (Sunday-civilized) time slot, offering fine alpine plants, perennials, indoor plants, woodland beauties, plus tender and hardy succulents,. This is your chance to pick up rarities from the nurseries of Wrightman (in Canada), Evermay (in Maine), and Sunny Border (in Connecticut). Furthermore, you may acquire lovingly-nurtured selections presented by your fellow MCGardeners. All will be bargain-priced at $4 (green tags), $6 (yellow), $8 (pink) and more (for some individual items).

You’ll derive the greatest enjoyment from this event if you pot up divisions of your most flourishing plants (on a cool morning, in late April), then bring them to El Sol Brillante around 9:30 am the morning of the Sale. Your early bird contributions will entitle you to first pick of the Sale offerings. (Please label your plants by name and price; also add your name, should the buyer wish to consult you.) Contributions of horticultural books and supplies are also welcome, as their sales, too, help to fill the Chapter’s coffers.

Spread the word and bring your friends, neighbors, and family.

If you can help out with this event by posting announcements, or participating in the set-up or take-down, please email Colta@coltaives.com (917-757-0334)

~ MANHATTAN CHAPTER NARGS ~
2010 Membership Form

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<td>Individual 3 years</td>
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<td>Gift membership*</td>
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Members’ dues status is indicated on this months’ mailing label. If you owe chapter dues, please take time to pay them now. Send your check with this form to: Gelene Scarborough, Membership Secretary
103 West 105th Street #5B
New York NY 10025

PLEASE PRINT
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Do you want to receive your newsletter via email only? We do not use your email for commercial purposes.

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Gift Membership
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MCNARGS is a volunteer organization. We would like your participation in our activities. How can you help?

☐ Plant-O-Rama (the last Tuesday in January at BBG)  ☐ Annual Plant Sale
☐ Newsletter  ☐ Hospitality

Other ____________________________
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THE MANHATTAN CHAPTER of NARGS, founded in 1987, is a group of gardening enthusiasts who are dedicated to the propagation and promotion of an eclectic range of plants, with emphasis on alpine and rock gardening selections. Our Chapter Programs, designed for a sophisticated mix of professionals and amateurs, cover a broad spectrum of special interests such as rock and alpine, woodland, bog, raised bed, planted walls as well as trough and container gardening.

The yearly membership fee of $20 entitles members to five informative copies of THE URBAN ROCK GARDENER, to attend all meetings and field trips, as well as tours of unique and private gardens; plus participation in our much-anticipated Annual Plant Sale. If you are not already a member we invite you to be a guest at one of our upcoming meetings.

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~ WE’LL SEE YOU AT THE MARCH AND APRIL MEETINGS ~
(Submission Deadline for the May/June Newsletter: May 10, 2010)