

# DIGGERS DIRT

The Dirt being dished this month...

## General Meetings:

**Wednesdays at 10:30, on site or by Zoom**

## Look ahead...

Oct 7 - Old Mill  
 November 4 - at Lisa Evans'  
 December 2  
 January 6  
 February 3  
 March 3  
 April 7  
 April 19/20 Auction Workdays  
 April 21 - Auction  
 May 5  
 June 2

## Bristol Farms Scrip

Contact Alfrida by the 10th of the month in order to receive your Bristol Farms Scrip. Confirm by mailing her a check payable to Diggers. Alfrida will deliver to you later in the month

## Board Meeting

**Monday October 5th, at 10:00am**



## From the President

Sitting down to write, I reflect on how we've been adapting without a road map. There is little certainty that life as we knew it will return. Rather, it will evolve and so must we when planning for the coming year. Our efforts to stimulate interest and participation in gardening while advocating for a healthy environment remain strong. Collaboration with the board to imagine new ways, troubleshoot potential pitfalls and take action creatively continues to be most rewarding for me. Abundant thanks to you all!

Recapping the year, we started off tending the garden at the Old Mill, had a horticulture session at Cindy's with her tutorial on planting a perfect Auction pot, toured the San Diego Botanic Garden with Dr. Ari Novy and donated 80 holiday arrangements, using environmentally friendly chicken wire cages, when gathered in Gwen's pool house during a downpour. We kicked off 2020 on a sunny day at Page's with an inspiring presentation about rethinking our garden beds, then a hands-on tutorial on making kimchee at Annette's. Later in February with the three LA-based



## Mark Your Calendar

### Upcoming GCA Dates

[www.gcamerica.org](http://www.gcamerica.org)

All GCA meetings and events will be virtual through June 20th, 2021

### Old Mill Work Days

June 22nd

July 20th

August 24th



GCA clubs, we heard Kat Superfisky discuss transforming urban areas into more inhabitable spaces. The first Wednesday of March we welcomed meeting speaker, Mike SanClements from Denver, who engaged us on the topic of wasteful plastic use. And then *everything* changed.

The day the Diggers Auction was canceled we didn't know how prescient a decision it would be. The coronavirus pandemic caused a calamitous change for GCA. Yet the strength of leadership and wealth of human resources has offered elemental support to member clubs in multiple ways.

In light of this, I'm moved by your support of the April flash sale, as well as the generous gifts from some past Auction guests. As a result, local and regional non-profits have received donation checks this month. Our first Zoom gathering with Master Gardener, Jeff Warner, as well as several smaller groups to discuss *The Biggest Little Farm*, *Five Seasons: The Gardens of Piet Ouldolf* and *Fantastic Fungi* raised my confidence to host the annual meeting by Zoom. Thanks to so many of you who witnessed Gwen receive her award for 50 years as a Diggers member.

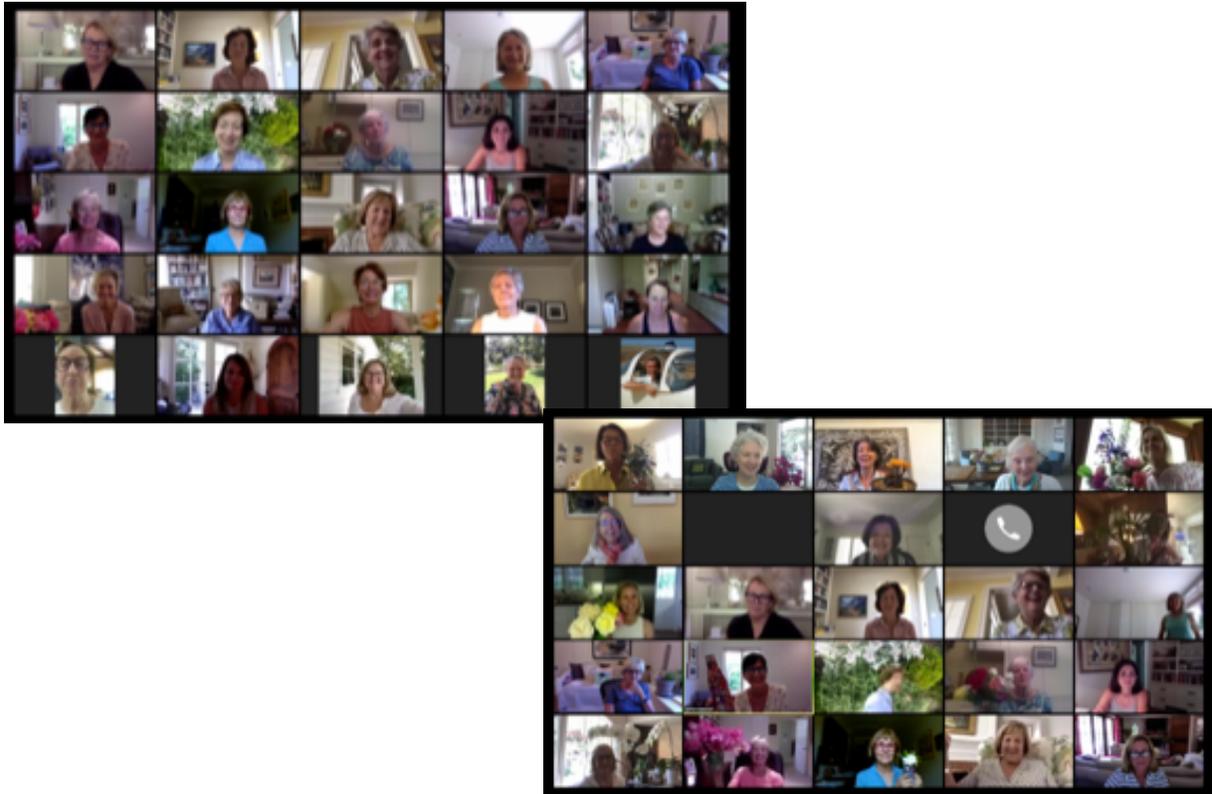
The garden and natural world are sanctuary in these tumultuous times. A stroll through the Old Mill, many community gardens and the Huntington, now that it has reopened, ignites the spirit and affirms the goodness in our lives. I hope you enjoy tending your own garden in our warm sun. Happy summer!

*Liz*

---

## Annual Meeting Via Zoom

---



---

## Our Founding Members - by Gwen Babcock

---

The Founding members of the Diggers Garden Club have interested me for a long time. I wonder how they decided to form a club. Most of them were about the same age: the eldest was 46 and the youngest was 36. Who was the first leader? That would be Elsie Jewett, who was born Elizabeth Sprague in Pennsylvania. Her husband, William Kennon Jewett, is buried across from the Garland and Babcock plot at the San Gabriel Cemetery in one of the largest monuments in the cemetery.

Since my father was a Jewett through his paternal grandmother, Rebecca Jewett Garland, I did a little research on Cousin William many years ago. He and I are

5th cousins, three times removed. His first wife, Patty Sprague Jewett died May 2, 1917 in Colorado Springs where he was a banker and they had a home. Her name is immortalized in the Patty Jewett Municipal Golf Course, which he gave to the city after her death. It was originally a private club, established in 1896.

On January 3, 1918 William married Patty's niece, Elizabeth (Elsie) Sprague at the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. Elsie was 40 years old, and 21 years his junior. They moved into William's California home in Pasadena.

The Jewett house was at 1201 (now 1145) Arden Road, and was the largest estate in the neighborhood. Numerous lots have been carved out and sold since the death of William and the departure of Elsie for the East Coast. William died on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August in 1935 in Montecito. Elsie was still living in the Arden Road house at the time of the 1940 census. She died on January 9, 1949 in Sharon, Connecticut, and is buried in the St. Thomas Episcopal Church cemetery in Whitemarsh, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.

The next President was Mrs. Charles Paxton (Renaltje Schenk Paxton) (1926-1927). The Paxtons lived at 1160 S. Orange Grove when she became a Digger. By 1940, they had moved to 1527 E. California. Their one child, a daughter, Jean was in the Class of 1938 at Westridge School. The house was divided into five sections and moved to 255 Hillside Road in South Pasadena in the 1970s.

The third President, Mrs. W. W. Phillips (Jessie Jones Phillips)(1928-1929) was a widow and a landscape architect who lived at 861 So. Euclid avenue in Pasadena. Her house looked charming from the street on May 6, 2019.

Other founders were Ellen Graham Aspinwall, who lived at 620 S. Sierra Bonita. Their house is listed in Zillow as being built in 1893. It still is a lovely looking house. Ellen, who had been born in France and her husband, Lloyd, had two sons, Randolph and William. The Aspinwalls had moved to Picacho Lane in Montecito by 1935. Randolph died in World War II at the age of 19. The family is buried in the Santa Barbara Cemetery.

Florence Van Vechten Murphy Dickey and her husband had a beautiful house at 514 Lester. The name of Lester Street was changed to Rosemont. He is listed as a zoologist in the local directory. They had moved to Ojai by 1930. They are buried in Colma, California.

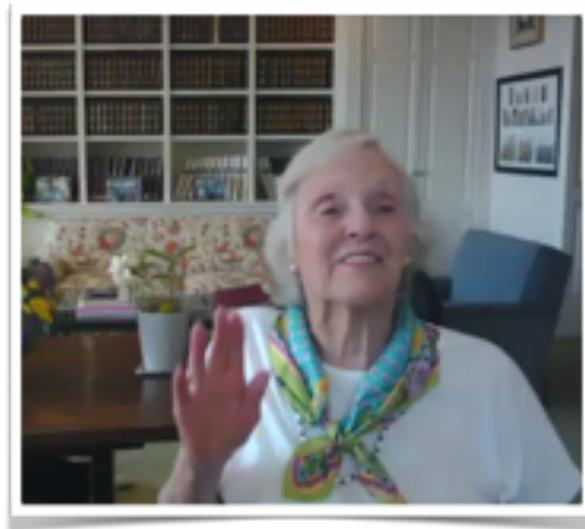
The fourth President was Mrs. Frank Briggs Badgely (Clara) (1930-1931) who I remember from when I joined the Diggers in 1970.

The fifth President was Miss Marguerite Gray (1932-1933). She lived at 636 S. Hudson Avenue.

The sixth President was Mrs. Frank Sellers (1934-1935). She lived at 810 S. Pasadena Avenue.

The seventh President, Mrs. Alson S. Clark (Medora)(1936-1937), had a wonderful house on the edge of the Arroyo at 1149 Wotkyns Drive. Her husband was one of the noted California Impressionist painters of the time and their home was designed by architect, Reginald Johnson. They are buried at Mountain View Cemetery in Altadena.

One of the things that struck me is that there were very few children among these founding members. Ellen Aspinwall had two sons, Randolph and William. Medora and Alson Clark had one son, Alson. William Jewett had no children with either of his wives. Florence Dickey had two daughters, Verna and Louella. Marguerite Gray was unmarried. The Paxtons had one daughter, Jean. Jessie Phillips had no children.



**Congratulations Gwen Babcock - Diggers 50 years!**

---

## Check this out...

---



Thank you, Connie, for sharing Lewis Miller's "Flower Flash" in NYC



In the past few months, Lewis Miller and the team have been secretly creating what they call "Flower Flash", a flower arrangement in Manhattan trash cans and street corners. "Flower Flash" aims to honor the medical staff and other first responders, to bring joy to New Yorkers who commute on a daily basis and let in the spring during the pandemic.



On PBS, check out Ecosense for Living segment "Wild Healing" to see GCA past scholarship recipient, Dr. Cassandra Quave, an ethnobotanist that studies plant-based medicines. Her presentation is very interesting! GCA awards 38 scholarships in 12 fields, annually.



On March 9<sup>th</sup> we learned about a newly released bill, the Great American Outdoors Act (S. 3422), which dedicates funds towards deferred maintenance on public lands and permanently and fully funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). I'm so pleased to report that the bill passed the Senate 73-25. The GCA was a significant force in its passage. Thank you, Mary, for your timely prompts and encouragement to voice support in advocacy of the environment!



Eric Haskell, GCA 2019 Honorary Member mentions his earliest association with the GCA (hint: Diggers). See page 54, Spring issue of the GCA Bulletin.

---

## Challenge Plant

---

Ceanothus glorious - What a fun challenge plant! Useful, native, beautiful, drought tolerant, low maintenance. This Ceanothus makes a tidy ground cover since its long, “whippy” runners will root and make the parent plant even stronger and healthier in the ground. Prune to control shape as desired, especially after blooming.



1<sup>st</sup> Place: Gwen. her plant appears large, well-grown with lots of secondary branching and dense bushy growth.



2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Judy. her plant glows with health, lustrous leaves and is getting some side-branching.



3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Yvonne - her plant has great color and is so healthy it looks like it could walk right out of the pot!



Honorable Mention: Adrienne – her plant has beautiful glossy leaves with great substance and vibrancy. It would benefit from some tip-pruning to promote more density.