

# Awards Presentation

175<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

November 12, 2002



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THE PENNSYLVANIA  
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

## DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

*Elizabeth P. McLean*

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Elizabeth, how appropriate that you receive the Distinguished Achievement Medal during the Society's 175th Anniversary! You embody so many things that we all care about at PHS—scholarly research, enthusiastic support for our mission, and willingness to serve in many capacities.

You have distinguished yourself in so many ways, not only at PHS, but also at horticultural institutions across the country, including the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, Gardens Collaborative, the Garden Club of America, Bartram's Garden, and the Arboretum School of the Barnes Foundation. You are a well-respected landscape and horticultural historian, as well as lecturer, researcher, writer, and teacher who generously shares her knowledge.

At PHS, we know you for all these things, as well as a tireless volunteer who has done so much over the years to enrich our world. You served for many years on Council as well as the Library and Executive committees, and are currently a member of the Education Services and Flower Show Executive committees.

Those who have had the privilege of working with you at the Flower Show—and there are many of us—are grateful for your support, encouragement, and sense of humor. Your first Show endeavor was the Tercentenary Garden's exhibit, "Changing Images of the Garden, 300 Years of Horticulture in the Delaware Valley," in 1982. This was the first exhibit to open in Philadelphia, then cross the Atlantic to the Chelsea Flower Show.

Over the years, your tact and grace have earned you the title of "Diplomat." You have served as liaison with other institutions for Central Feature exhibits, including the Gardens Collaborative and the Academy of Natural Sciences; your relationship with Penelope Hobhouse opened the door for her to be the guest Central Features exhibitor for "Great Gardeners of the World."

So many have enjoyed your generosity as you and your husband, Bill, have opened your beautiful garden to PHS members, rain and shine.

Beyond PHS, you are a Research Associate in Botany for the Academy of Natural Sciences, and have served as a consultant to the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, the "Highlands," and the Philadelphia Landmark Society. Your writings have been published in *Bartonia*, *Green Scene*, and the *Winterthur Portfolio*. You have served on boards of a number of area organizations, and have chaired the board of the Library Company—America's oldest cultural institution—for the past four years, the first woman president in its 270-year history.

Elizabeth, it is with great pride and affection that we award you PHS's Distinguished Medal.

### CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

*Jerry and Bea Barad*

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Jerry and Bea, you have made a significant impact on the local, national, and international horticultural community in many ways. From your exquisite plants and collections you exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show, to your active leadership in the Cactus and Succulent Society, you continue to inspire and educate.

You are well known to the PHS community as perennial award-winning Flower Show exhibitors. Some of the top awards you have won include the Meadowbrook Farm Indoor Gardening Trophy for your "Fabulous Fat Plants," as well as the Far Out Cactus Award, PHS Best of Day, and the Garden Club of America Certificate of Excellence. Judges and visitors alike recognize your perfectly exquisite succulent collections and specimens; fellow exhibitors always appreciate your warm support and encouragement.

You have been active members of the Philadelphia Cactus and Succulent Society, as well as the society in New Jersey, and were instrumental in organizing the New York Cactus and Succulent Society in the late fifties. Jerry, you served as president and long-time board member of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. Since you and Bea were crowned King and Queen at one of the first CSSA conventions years ago, you have continued to attend countless conventions, conferences, and symposia—usually in a leadership capacity.

It's safe to say that you have made historic contributions to the cactus and succulent hobby with your selfless dedication to collecting, propagating, and sharing your expertise. You have performed pioneering work in the study of asclepiad reproductive biology, championed the cause of succulent plant conservation, and discovered many new species during your travels. You continue to share your knowledge through lectures, articles, and photographs.

Your hospitality is legendary. For the past 40 years, you have hosted a summer picnic at your Central New Jersey home for Cactus and Succulent societies. Your guests have marveled at your extensive collection of plants (10,000 and counting – and that's just in the greenhouses), while eagerly awaiting Bea's delicious meals. You enjoy giving your plants to others, and especially love to share your plants with children, teaching them about these unique and unusual plants and how to grow them.

Warm, caring, generous, knowledgeable: These are the words that people you've touched and inspired use to describe you. We are delighted to award you the Society's Certificate of Merit.

### CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

*Bitsy and Louis Hood*

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Bitsy and Louis, you are PHS's goodwill ambassadors par excellence. You have been great friends of the Society and other local horticultural institutions, giving your time, talents, expertise, and enthusiasm in many ways.

Louis, you have been a stalwart member of the Society's Membership Committee for more than 15 years, helping with every major and minor event that we sponsor, including serving as chair of the annual Plant Dividend. You have been most generous with your horticultural knowledge as a member of the Ask-a-Gardener Q & A team, where the number of challenging and strange questions on a lovely spring morning can rise past 20. As Flower Show Horticultural Information Booth Vice-Chair, you continue to offer horticultural expertise with a dash of humor, and Flower Show visitors flock to the Gardener's Studio to hear your latest amusing adventures in "Louie vs. the Deer." When you're not

dispensing sound advice at the Show, we can find you selling PHS in the Membership Booth.

Bitsy, you have been generous with your time at the Flower Show, too, where you greet members with warmth and good cheer in our Membership Lounge. You have been a very successful exhibitor in the niche aisle, and have worked with members of your garden club on many an exhibit. As a graduate of the National Cathedral arranging school, you helped when they came to participate in the Central Features Exhibit. You have also served as a judge of the City Gardens Contest and clerked at the Junior Flower Show (now Kids Grow Expo).

Together, you make a great team. You have generously shared your garden with members of PHS and other horticultural organizations, including the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College. You have taken courses at Longwood Gardens. And you have been active supporters of each other's dedication to other institutions, such as the Four Counties Garden Club, Jenkins Arboretum, The Appleford Committee, and the Garden Club of America, on which Bitsy served as a director.

Louis and Bitsy, you represent why it is so much fun to be a part of public horticulture, and for this and all your good work, we present you with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Certificate of Merit.

### CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

*James Stanley*

Jim, you epitomize the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's mission to motivate people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture.

When you moved to Philadelphia at age 20, you brought a love of nature, children and cars. All three have remained central to your life and work in West Philadelphia. In 1991 you purchased a building at 1620 North 52nd Street in West Parkside and established the S-Kids Auto Body Shop. Faced with a skeptical community that didn't want more clutter in the neighborhood, you convinced them that you would not only repair wrecked cars, but would also beautify their

neighborhood. And true to your word, you created a horticultural haven in this small section of the city.

You have won numerous PHS City Gardens Contests prizes. The award-winning Ella Francis Garden at 52nd and Parkside Avenue combines flowers and vegetables, providing the community with both beauty and bounty. These highly visible gardens have drawn the attention of others in Philadelphia, including District Attorney Lynn Abraham, who presented you with a grant. Last year, you completed a traffic island landscape located at Belmont and Parkside Avenues.

A member of the Philadelphia Green Advisory Board, you serve as the Program Director of the newly established Community Landscape Program of West Park Cultural and Opportunity Center, providing training in landscape design and gardening for children and youth. You are also a member of the Boards of the Business Association of West Parkside, West Park Cultural and Opportunity Center and Parkside Association.

You have passed on your love for plants to your community as well as to your sons, who have joined you in your recently established landscaping business, Urban Scapes and Developing. Many assume that you have an advanced degree in horticulture. "It just comes naturally," you like to say.

It is with great admiration for your work and dedication to the Society's mission that we present you with the Certificate of Merit.

### CENTENARY MEDAL

*Ernesta Ballard*

*by Jane G. Pepper, President, The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society  
originally printed in Green Scene*

We call her "Mom," but to the rest of the world she's a woman of amazing talents, extraordinary dedication and enormous commitment. I first met Ernesta Ballard in the mid-'70s, when I was a horticulture student. To me, Ernesta was already a legend and my goal at the time was to figure out how to work at PHS when I finished my studies. How lucky I felt that evening to meet Ernesta and her late husband Fred over dinner in Chadds Ford. Poor Fred—he had to sit next to me

and have me bombard him with questions about Ernesta, my horticultural heroine.

When I came to work at PHS in 1979, I was able to witness what others already knew. In the 16 years that Ernesta had led PHS, she had changed the Society from a quiet, low-profile organization that struggled financially to one that pulsed with excitement and opportunities. If you were interested in horticulture, PHS was the place to be.

Early in her tenure as PHS's executive director, Ernesta seized the reins of the Philadelphia Flower Show from Philadelphia Flower Show, Inc., a not-for-profit association of nurserymen and growers. It was 1964 and the old Commercial Museum was about to be torn down to be replaced by the Philadelphia Civic Center. Officials from PFS Inc. said they would not hold a flower show for a couple of years. "Ridiculous," said Ernesta, "If you let them relax for two winters, you will never get those exhibitors back for another Show."

With resolve, Ernesta ran a show in the 23rd Street Armory in 1965 with 33,000 attendees and another, the next year, in the lower level of the Philadelphia Civic Center. In 1966, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society became the official producer of the Philadelphia Flower Show. Ten years later, attendance was 276,000 and the Show was recognized as the best indoor flower show in North America.

With the Flower Show under control and the Society's finances in robust shape, Ernesta set out to conquer new frontiers. First, she launched Green Scene, under the capable leadership of editor Jean Byrne. Her next challenge was to start a community greening program to invest the monies raised through the Show in Philadelphia. It was a modest operation at first, with two staff members, a truck, and lots of flyers and enthusiasm. In Philadelphia's low-income communities, PHS discovered an enormous desire for help in establishing gardens on long-abandoned lots and for planting street trees and window boxes where there was no space for a garden. Today, Philadelphia Green is known throughout the country as the nation's most ambitious and far-reaching city greening program.

In her tenure as executive secretary and later president, Ernesta transformed PHS and laid the foundations for the Philadelphia Flower Show and Philadelphia

Green, two programs that have brought pleasure and satisfaction to staff, volunteers and thousands of Philadelphia visitors and residents. Another of Ernesta's enormous contributions to PHS was the hiring of two other people who (out of her earshot) also call her "Mom." Ed Lindemann, hired by Ernesta in 1972 has since 1980 been our Flower Show designer. Blaine Bonham, now PHS's executive vice president, shares much of the credit with Ernesta for the success of Philadelphia Green. Like me, they recognize not only the important role "Mom" played in our lives, but also the foundations she laid, upon which we have built in the 21 years since she left PHS.

Ernesta—we are proud of your accomplishments since you left PHS, notably as Commissioner of Fairmount Park and as the driving force behind the restoration of the Logan Square fountain and the Water Works. But we are most proud of the legacy you left for all your "kids" on the staff and as volunteers at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

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*My purpose here is to call your attention to another aspect of 1972, namely, that it has been a year of looking ahead and tooling up for the challenges that will confront our Society during the coming years....*

*I cannot say precisely what the outcome will be. But out of the mass of memoranda, proposals, discussions and meetings, I begin to see emerging the concept of an urban horticultural society serving the needs of a great city and its suburbs in an age when the quality of life is acknowledged to be of fundamental importance. It is a challenging vision to a growing society.*

*Excerpt from Ernesta D. Ballard's  
"Report from the Director," 1972 PHS Yearbook*

## Awards Selection Committee

Patricia Fox Feehrer, *Chair*

Sally N. Graham, *Vice-chair*

Anna Marie Amey

Susan D. Armstrong

Martha B. Barron

Richard A. Colbert

Midge Ingersoll

Richard W. Lighty

Flossie Narducci

Claire Sawyers

Bill Thomas

Anne B. Kellett, *ex-officio*

## CENTENARY MEDAL

*The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society*

"...the Centenary Medal be not awarded yearly, or at any definite period, but be held for special occasions or special individuals whom the Society may wish, from time to time, to honor." *Report by William J. Serrill, chairman of the Centennial Celebration Committee, October 1927. (Boyd, p. 341)*

1927 – James Boyd, President: 1918-1929

- "For his unique service in putting the Society again on its feet and restoring it to its present flourishing condition.
- For his valuable and long continued service in many lines of endeavor in the cause of Horticulture.
- Because it is fitting that the president of the Society on its one-hundredth anniversary should receive the medal celebrating that anniversary and bearing on its obverse the bust of the first president."

1929 – Massachusetts Horticultural Society in commemoration of its Centennial Anniversary

1931 – Mr. & Mrs. Pierre S. DuPont

"For their accomplishments in the field of horticulture, as expressed at their country estate, "Longwood." For its beauty, grandeur, and its vast collection of specimens and rare plants it is outstanding and unexcelled."

1939 – John Caspar Wister, Secretary: 1928-1951

"For his splendid contributions to horticulture and his loyalty to this Society."

1942 – C. Frederick C. Stout, Vice-President: 1920-1929; President: 1929-1950

"For promoting the welfare of the Society."

The Centenary Medal presented to James Boyd is in the Archives of the McLean Library at PHS. The obverse design is a bust of Horace Binney, an organizer of the Society and its first president (1828). He also served as president from 1836 to 1841. The reverse of the medal depicts Bartram's Garden. In the 1920's the Society provided financial support to Bartram's Garden, America's first botanical garden. No specific mention of the reverse design appears in the Society's minutes.

The first Centenary Medal was minted by Medallic Art Company, New York City. Founded in 1903, Medallic designs and produces custom and commemorative medals such as the Pulitzer Prize, the Peabody Award, the Newberry and Caldecott medals, and the Inaugural medals for eleven U.S. presidents. Now located in Dayton, NV, Medallic produced the medal being awarded this year from dies in their archives.

Quoted material from *The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society 1827-1927* by James Boyd, published by the Society in 1929.