



The Munsinger Clemens Gardens – The Jewel of St. Cloud

by Stephen Fuller



The title above is the title of a new book this spring. My hope is that this book will provide a lasting legacy of the creation and history of the Gardens as well as a keepsake for people who come to enjoy the

Gardens. Toward the upkeep and maintenance of the Gardens, I have decided to donate one-half of the proceeds from book sales to the Munsinger Clemens Endowment Fund established at the Central Minnesota Community Foundation.

What will be in the book? Lots of pictures, to be sure, and the history behind both Gardens. Here are some "teaser" questions that will be addressed:

- What was the status of Saint Cloud parks when Joseph Munsinger decided to create Munsinger Gardens?

- What park was Munsinger Gardens originally part of?
- Where did the log cabin in Munsinger Gardens come from?
- What was the role of the WPA and other public works programs in shaping the Gardens?
- What business existed on the site where Munsinger Gardens is now located?
- How has Munsinger Gardens changed since Joseph Munsinger's death?
- What role did David Morreim play in upgrading Munsinger Gardens and creating the six Clemens Gardens?
- Which of the six Clemens Gardens came first?
- What is the role that Bill and Virginia Clemens played in creating the Clemens Gardens? In preserving the upkeep of both gardens?
- Where did those beautiful fountains come from?
- What other organizations in the Saint

Cloud community have contributed to the upkeep and expansion of these Gardens?

- What has changed in both Gardens since David Morreim's tenure?
- How has the Saint Cloud community embraced the Gardens and made them a part of the fabric of the city?
- What can each of us personally do to help preserve and sustain the Gardens?

These are just part of the areas covered in the book. Also included will be a section on artistic representations of the Gardens through representative paintings as well as a few winners of the photo contest sponsored by the Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society. My hope is that this book will solidify the special role these Gardens play in the life of our community.

*Editor's note: We sincerely regret that Stephen Fuller did not live to hold the printed book in his hands. His family together with Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society are planning a launch event to introduce **The Munsinger/Clemens Gardens—The Jewel of St. Cloud** to the public. Elsewhere in this newsletter, see the announcement.*

What's Up in the Gardens?

by Joan Andersen

Recently I visited with Nia Primus, Gardens Supervisor, to learn about her favorite annuals grown in 2014. The best annuals must produce lots of flowers (or beautiful colorful leaves on plants grown for foliage) and have healthy growth with easy maintenance. These plants grow without much special attention and were appreciated by visitors and gardeners.

Alternanthera "Red Threads" is grown for its slender foliage that has burgundy red leaves with a purple edge. The plant

is short, about 8" tall, and forms a mass of color. It was planted in the Formal Gardens where it made a nice contrast to the flowers planted next to it.

"Gryphon" begonia has dramatic, tropical-looking green and silver leaves. It grows about 15" high and 15" wide. It is a shade plant that was featured in the gardens in the Special Events area and used in many areas of Munsinger.

"Cissus Discolor" is a vining Rex begonia. It has the striking green and silver leaves of a Rex but can be used as a

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What's Up in the Gardens?

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trailer or be trained to climb a short arbor. This plant is a shade lover and was planted in the boxes on top of the chain link fence surrounding the cement pond in Munsinger, where it grew on the fence and helped to disguise it.

Gaura "Star Struck" is an improvement from other white gaura. It is pure white, compared to white cultivars that show some pink. It is planted in the White Garden, where the flowers should be white! "Star Struck" holds its airy flowers 12-24" above the foliage.

New Guinea impatiens have replaced many of the impatiens that used to be planted in the shady parts of the Gardens. (It became impossible to use regular impatiens because they were killed by a disease called downy mildew.) New Guinea impatiens come in a range of colors from cool shades of blue, violet, lilac, and purple to warm colors such as scarlet, coral, salmon, pink, and red. Some cultivars have a bronze leaf instead of the usual green. Last year, gardeners planted 22 different colors of New Guinea impatiens—there was a color for every design.

Torenia "Summer Wave" is also used in areas that were formerly planted in impatiens. Nia has tried some of the other types of torenia and she says that this series grows the best here. The plant is available in cool shades of amethyst, violet, rose, blue, silver, and white. The plants are 6-8" or 8-10" tall, depending on the cultivar. The foliage is green, and flowers face up above the leaves to give a colorful display in the shade.

Salvia "Sallyfun" White was another plant chosen for the White Garden because it has pure white blooms that have no trace of yellow or pink. It is a good-sized annual with flower spikes up to 24" and grayish-green foliage. (She has a sister "Sallyfun" Blue that was much appreciated in the blue garden in Treillage.)

Rudbeckia "Prairie Sun" is a relative of the familiar black-eyed Susan. It has yellow-tipped orange rays, and the

centers are green instead of brown. The overall effect is citrusy colors that provide a sunny effect in the garden. It was planted around the Clemens Memorial Dome and Clemens Perennial Fountain.

Zinnia "Benary's Giant" are big tall zinnias that come in a range of colors. They were planted at the entrance to the Greenhouse and around the Clemens Memorial Dome. If you need cut flowers from your garden, this is your plant. Cutting flowers or deadheading this plant just makes it produce more flowers.

A special mention must be made for Verbena Bonariensis "Buenos Aires" that was planted in the Rest Area Garden, surrounded by "Magellan Pink" zinnias. This plant bears purple flowers on airy tall stems and attracts attention wherever it is planted.

We look forward to the new season. Some of these plants may appear again this year and there will be many new cultivars planted. Be sure to ask one of the gardeners to identify a plant if you see one you like. Many of the plants grown in the Gardens will be available at nurseries for you to buy for your own garden.

Beware the Ides of March!

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the time for us to clean out the nest box in preparation for the next occupants, who may show up within just a day or two. When this happens, I am never sure if it is the original pair starting a new brood or a new pair that have decided they like the neighborhood. Most years the successful Eastern Bluebird will have two broods; if the weather cooperates they may even have three.

Initially the fledglings follow their parents around, which gives the young birds experience as to where to locate food, and after a week or two they begin to feed on their own. What a delight it is to see our meal-worm feeder filled with eight to ten bluebirds all happily feasting on one of their favorite delicacies. The parents gradually stop feeding the young, but juvenile birds often remain with their parents until migration in the fall and will even help to feed subsequent broods during the summer. Family flocks are not uncommon.

Yes, I look forward to the Ides of March. The nesting boxes are cleaned and ready and there's a fresh tub of meal worms in the refrigerator. I'm on the alert for that first flash of blue along our road again this spring. I'm ready for the return of the bluebird of happiness.

Are you looking for an intimate setting for your wedding or event?

The beauty of Saint Cloud's Munsinger Gardens provides the ideal setting for ceremonies and professional photography sessions. Ceremonies are held in the Special Events Area of the Gardens. This "botanical room" provides a private setting within the beauty of the Gardens. Posed photography sessions, including wedding, family, or senior photos, are allowed by permit in designated photography sites throughout Munsinger Gardens.

Ceremony Fees

Ceremony reservations are scheduled for two-hour time blocks; this includes the ceremony and photography sessions.

Residents of Saint Cloud—\$250

Non-Residents of Saint Cloud—\$300

Photography Fees

Photography groups over 12 people

Residents of Saint Cloud—\$70 per session

Non-Residents of Saint Cloud—\$90 per session

Photography groups under 12 people

Residents of Saint Cloud—\$35 per session

Non-Residents of Saint Cloud—\$45 per session

Please call 320-257-5959 to book your event or for more information.

Beware the Ides of March!

by Anne Przybilla

Much to his detriment, Julius Caesar chose to ignore this ominous warning from the soothsayer, and to this day many people still superstitiously consider the 15th of March to be a day that brings nothing but bad luck. However, it's a date I look forward to with anticipation.

The days are growing longer now and the snow will be gone in just a couple of weeks, but best of all, March 15, give or take a day or two, is when the first bluebird usually shows up in our neighborhood. I know that some people think of the robin as the harbinger of spring, but for me it's the Eastern Bluebird, and I eagerly look forward to its return each year.

When I was growing up on the prairies of western Minnesota blue jays were a common site, but I thought of the *bluebird* as a mythical creature found only in fairy tales and story books because I had never seen one. It wasn't until I moved to Stearns County 20 years ago that I saw my first live bluebirds and immediately fell in love with them. I saw at once what Thoreau meant when he remarked that the bluebird carries the blue of the sky on its back. (Did I mention that blue has always been my favorite color?)

But why were these wonderful little birds so few and far between during my childhood? If historical records are to be believed, bluebirds were much more common in this country in the 1700s and 1800s than they are now. It is no coincidence that bluebird populations began to decline following the introduction of two species from Europe—the house sparrow in 1851 and the starling in 1890. These non-native birds had no natural predators in this country, and their rapid rate of reproduction was detrimental to several native species. Bluebird populations seem to have suffered more than others because they were not as successful in competing with these aggressive birds for fewer and fewer available nesting cavities. Just 50 years after its introduction to this country, the English house sparrow was the most common bird in North America, and by 1940 the starling had spread throughout all of the United States as well as southern Canada. During this same time span, bluebird numbers plummeted. No wonder they were so few and far between when I was growing up.

In the 1930s people began to notice that bluebird populations were dwindling, and conservation efforts focused initially on restoring their habitat and then later, following WWII, on creating "bluebird trails" as well. The first statewide bluebird recovery program in the nation was initiated right here in Minnesota in 1979. It is because of programs like these that bluebird populations have rebounded and the bluebird has once again become a common summer resident in most of its original native territory.

Keep your feeders full and your eyes peeled and you may be rewarded with the appearance of a bluebird in your own



backyard. The males are the first to return and that's usually in mid-March here in central Minnesota, but freezing temperatures and March blizzards have been known to delay their arrival until as late as May some years. They arrive a few days ahead of the females and are scouting for ideal nesting locations with abundant food resources (this is when I put out the meal

worms in hopes of tempting them to stay nearby), but they are notorious for showing up in an area and then leaving before returning again to finally stake out their territory. Day after day he sings his sweetest, most seductive song until his call is answered and a potential mate appears.

Once a pair have bonded, courting behavior begins in earnest with the male using acrobatic flight displays to impress his mate. He becomes very attentive, often fetching tasty insect morsels to feed to the female. This behavior varies in frequency from one pair to another and usually continues well into the nesting period.

While the male may be the leader in exploring potential nesting locations, it is the female that finally chooses the nest site, and she is the one that does the nest building. The male attentively follows the female from place to place as she gathers materials and builds the nest. Some believe this is to protect her from attack by larger predatory birds, and others think it is so he can drive off competing males. When finished, the nest forms a neat little cup constructed of fine grasses and pine needles.

Weather is again a factor. Cold and rain may delay nest building, but once it is completed the egg laying begins within a day or two. This is usually mid-April in this area. The eggs are laid early in the morning, and just one egg a day is laid until the clutch is complete. Incubation does not begin until all of the eggs have been laid and usually lasts twelve to fourteen days. The eggs hatch over a period of a day or so and in the order in which they were laid.

Once hatching is complete, the real work begins for the parents. At first the young are fed small soft foods like spiders and caterpillars, but as they grow and develop so do their appetites. Larger insects like grasshoppers and beetles become daily fare, and ripe berries are added when they are available. At this stage of the game, if the birds have taken up residence in one of our bluebird boxes, we could go through hundreds of meal worms a week. The parents eat them to maintain their strength as well as feeding them to their young.

Barring bad weather or predators, the young birds are usually ready to leave the nest within 20 days of hatching. They instinctively know how to fly, and all will leave the nest within an hour or so. They are called fledglings at this point because they are still dependent on their parents for food. This is also

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Jackpot Year for AAS Winners

by Carl Hoffman

Those of us who look for new plants to try in our gardens hit the jackpot this year as All-America Selections have named 25 winners for 2015. This is the most winners in over 75 years. The plants selected for the AAS honors have been tested in trial gardens across the United States and have been chosen for superior performance under a wide range of environmental conditions by a panel of AAS judges. The 2015 selections include six flowers, three herbs, and 16 vegetables. With such a great assortment of plant groups, it will be possible to design an entire garden using AAS winners with confidence that they will all perform well.

Because of space limitations in this Newsletter, it is necessary that I am brief with the characteristics of each of these selections (I certainly do not want to be a space hog). If you desire more information on any or all of these selections, go to the AAS website at all-americaselections.com.

I will begin with the flower selections, the first two being red petunias. I have often said that I like any color as long as it is red, so I will definitely be looking for these two winners. The first of these is Petunia 'Tidal Wave Red Velour F1' with its unique velvety dark red color. If you have used or are still using the 2002 AAS selection 'Tidal Wave Silver,' you are familiar with the desirable traits of this group of petunias. They are often referred to as "hedgiflora petunias" because they provide height as well as the space-covering quality of the wave petunias. They are heat resistant and require no deadheading. 'Tidal Wave Silver' has been joined by 'Tidal Wave Hot Pink,' 'Tidal Wave Cherry,' 'Tidal Wave Purple,' and now 'Tidal Wave Red Velour.' I have used all four of the former colors in my borders, beds, and large containers and am eagerly anticipating trying the 2015 winner. The second petunia that has been named an AAS winner is Petunia 'Trilogy Red F1.' The trilogy petunias have a growth habit entirely opposite that of the Tidal Waves. They are desired for their compact dome shape and their large nonfading blossoms throughout the season. The new stunningly vibrant red color gives the Trilogy petunias a new color.

Salvia 'Summer Jewel White' joins Jewel Red and Jewel Pink salvias (*Salvia coccinea*) and adds a much needed color to the Summer Jewel series. This prolific bloomer has a compact, dwarf-sized growth habit and a large bloom count throughout the season. It is an excellent selection for bedding and mass landscape plantings.

Those of us who are still old fashioned enough to use edging plants around our beds and borders will like 'Dianthus Interspecific Jolt Pink F1.' This hybrid dianthus has bright pink fringed flowers that remain colorful and neat throughout the season. It is a season-long performer and is very durable, standing up to hot summer conditions and continuing to flower without setting seeds, thus providing vibrant color to summer beds and borders.

With all the hype about downy mildew problems in impatiens, I was surprised to learn that AAS has named two impatiens to



Save these dates
Summer 2015 Gardens Events:

the 2015 winners list. As we can expect, both cultivars are listed as being completely downy mildew resistant. The first, 'Impatiens Bounce Pink Flame PPAF Baloufink,' provides bright pink bicolor blooms on plants that may range from 12" to 24" tall, and it performs well in either sun or shade. If it wilts, just give it some water and it will "bounce" back. It resembles *Impatiens walleriana*, but with its disease resistance it will restore shade garden confidence. The second impatiens to receive an AAS award is 'Impatiens Sunpatiens Spreading Shell Pink.' As its name indicates, this impatiens performs well in either full sun or shade. It is a larger impatiens and often grows to over 24" tall, making it useful in larger beds, containers, or baskets.

Two types of basil are represented on the 2015 winners list for herbs. 'Basil Dolce Fresca' produces sweet tender leaves while maintaining an attractive, compact shape that makes it both edible and ornamental. It is heat tolerant and recovers quickly after harvesting. The second selection is 'Basil Persian,' a Thai-type basil producing huge yields of greenish-silver leaves that make delicious pesto. It adds a wonderful pungency to the garden and is an excellent bee attractant.

The third herb winner is 'Oregano Cleopatra,' which has silver-gray foliage with a pepperminty and mildly spicy flavor. This herb is perfect for Mediterranean dishes, soup, and sauces. Its pale pink flowers attract pollinators.

In the vegetable category, 'Beet Avalanche' has snow-white flesh that is exceptionally sweet with a middle beet flavor. The tops have a pleasant tender texture and a nice sweetness for salads. This variety will give all the desirable qualities of beets without the "bleeding" and staining associated with red beets.

'Broccoli Artwork' produces "stem broccoli" or "baby broccoli," the gracefully arranged veggie that often accompanies filets or chops in gourmet restaurants. It is slow to bolt and will produce multiples times with the right growing conditions. 'Brussels Sprouts Hestia F1' is only the second Brussels Sprouts to ever be named an AAS winner. It has excellent flavor with bright green exterior and smooth, dense yellow interior.

'Cucumber Parisian Gherkin' is an excellent mini or gherkin pickling cucumber that can be picked at either the midget or small pickle size and processed or left on the vine a little longer and used in salads. The vines reach a length of 24", making this cucumber a good choice for small or raised gardens or trellised in containers.

If you are a pepper lover, you are in luck as there have been five varieties of peppers named as AAS winners. 'Pepper Emerald Fire F1' is the hottest pepper on the 2015 list (2,500 Scoville units). It produces extra-large and very tasty jalapeno fruits that are perfect for grilling or using in salsa. A second hot pepper is 'Pepper Hot Sunset F1' (650 Scoville units). This is a banana or wax pepper that produces a large early harvest of delicious spicy fruit. It is an excellent choice for gardeners who are gourmet grillers. 'Pepper Sweet Sunset F1' is a compact

sweet banana pepper that is vigorous and sets a large amount of fruit that is great eaten fresh or canned. 'Pepper Flaming Flare F1' is an early-maturing, mild-flavored Fresno pepper that is brilliant red when mature, an ideal pepper for making chili sauces. 'Pepper Pretty N Sweet F1' is a sweet-tasting, multicolored pepper on a compact 18-inch plant. Attractive in ornamental gardens and containers, it is sometimes called an "ornamedible" pepper because it tastes good and is attractive.

'Radish Roxanne F1' has just what we look for in radishes: bright red exterior, beautiful white interior, and a perfect round shape. 'Roxanne' is a great tasting radish with no pithiness even at larger sizes. It is an excellent choice for raised beds and even containers.

'Lettuce Sandy' is the first AAS winning lettuce since 1985. 'Sandy' is an attractive oakleaf type lettuce with a multitude of sweet, frilly, dark-green leaves. It has exceptional disease resistance, especially to powdery mildew and slow bolt.

'Pak Choi Bopak F1' is the first Pak Choi to become an AAS winner. It matures early and the tender leaves with crisp sweet stalks taste great.

What would a list of vegetables be without a zucchini? 'Squash Bossa Nova F1' is a zucchini squash with a pronounced dark and light green mottled exterior. The brightly variegated squash is easy to find among the dark leaves during harvest. 'Squash Butterscotch F1' is a small fruited butternut squash with an exceptionally sweet taste. The size is perfect for gardeners who are looking for a squash with great flavor and a size that gives just one or two servings.

The 2015 AAS tomato winner is 'Tomato Chef's Choice Pink F1,' a beefsteak type that yields 12-14 ounce pink fruit. The potato leaf plants have good disease resistance to F, A, N, TMV, crack, and scab. This tomato has perfect acid-to-sugar balance, making it just right for the home chef. Unfortunately for us with smaller gardens, it is a large plant that will need staking or caging.

These selections may take some searching, but nearly all of them should be available as seeds or transplants. You may have to check out your favorite catalog or online seed source, or in the case of young plants your favorite greenhouse. Have a rewarding time finding and growing the 2015 All-America Selections.

This Old River

by William M. Cook

The Mississippi River is one of the defining landscape features of Central Minnesota and an integral part of the environment of Clemens and especially Munsinger Gardens. In a previous newsletter I wrote an ode to the Mississippi, though here I will be a bit more technical and provide some background on the geologic history of the River and how it got to be here.

Famously, the Mississippi River flows 2300 miles from Lake Itasca in north-central Minnesota, all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. Almost 30% of that distance is either within or next to Minnesota; in my view, the Mississippi belongs more to the North Star State than to those folks down south. Whichever way, those 2300 miles include a lot of twists and turns, since as the crow flies (assuming it flies straight) the distance from Lake Itasca to New Orleans is only half that. And as the River is long and meandering, so is its history.

We could start our history of the Mississippi at several points in time, but here and for us we will begin during the Wisconsin glacial period, around 35,000-10,000 years ago. During this period, the most recent of the Ice Ages, most of Minnesota was covered by a sheet of ice thousands of feet thick. This glaciation explains much of the current topography of the state, including the famous 10,000 lakes and the location of the Mississippi River. During the Wisconsin glacial period, giant lobes of ice pushed south, retreated north, and then pushed south again in different orientations, scouring the land's surface and leaving behind moraines and eskers, long hills of sediment that form under and at the edges of glaciers.

During the later stages of the Wisconsin glaciation, the great ice sheet began to retreat to the north. As a glacier retreats, it

does not turn around and go back the way that it came; instead, it keeps pushing forward (in our case, south) but melts at the end faster than it pushes. This means at that time the area around the edge of the glacier becomes inundated with a vast amount of very cold meltwater pouring off. This led to a period of several thousand years when central North America was covered by several temporary meltwater lakes including Lake Agassiz. Covering northern Minnesota, part of North Dakota, and a great area of Canada, they made up possibly the largest freshwater lake ever. Eventually the natural dams that held in the water of these glacial lakes broke, and the water drained out of the region in multiple directions. Water draining south eventually formed the Minnesota and the Mississippi Rivers.

While the formation of the Mississippi River in its current location is a matter of thousands of years, the River also tells us about much older phenomena. The sediments from the glacier are recent on the geological time scale, but they currently overlay a lot of much older deposits. As the River has cut its way down stream and down in time, it has revealed layers from as much as 550 million years ago, when a shallow sea covered southeastern Minnesota. The classic bluffs along the River farther downstream from us are from 450-550 million years ago, again very old.

I hope you have enjoyed this brief scientific introduction to the Mississippi. The next time you are at Munsinger Gardens, look out over the River and think about what it might have looked like 5000 years ago, 10,000 years ago, or millions of years ago before the water flowed. In the future I will discuss some of the modern-day ecology of the River, its wildlife, and how the city of Saint Cloud has changed it.

Joseph Munsinger and Munsinger Gardens

by Stephen Fuller

Joseph Munsinger created Munsinger Gardens after he became Superintendent of Parks in Saint Cloud in 1930. Joseph's family had moved to Saint Cloud in 1878 when he was just two years old. Prior to 1930, Munsinger worked in the plumbing and heating business and was a lieutenant in the city's fire department. By 1924, Munsinger had become actively involved in Saint Cloud's park system, first as a member of the park board, then by becoming the city weed inspector as well as the chief plumbing inspector.

The site where Munsinger Gardens now is located had been the H J Andersen Sawmill. Andersen had abandoned the mill in 1897 after a series of fires at the mill, and moved to Hudson, Wisconsin. The current Munsinger Gardens land along the Mississippi was originally part of Riverside Park, officially established in 1915. In 1923, the southern portion of the park was designated as a tourist camping area, which by 1930 had six log cabins. But in 1933 the camping ground was abandoned due to lack of revenue. The "timekeeper's cabin" in Munsinger Gardens is one of those cabins, relocated to the current Gardens site in 1934.

When Joseph Munsinger became Parks Superintendent, his charge was to improve the city's park system. Besides the creation of Munsinger Gardens, he oversaw the transformation of Seberger, Hester, Eastman, Empire, and Wilson Parks. Munsinger was able to take advantage of the Works Public Administration (WPA) program established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of the New Deal program. Munsinger engaged WPA laborers to help him improve the parks. The city of Saint Cloud took advantage of the labor through not only the WPA but also the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the National Youth Administration (NYA) for various public projects throughout the city. Although he had a limited education, Joseph wrote out details of the work he completed in each of the city parks he worked on. He recorded the building of stone walls and terraces, the planting of sod and hedges, and the addition of wading pools and tennis courts. He also supervised the building of city skating rinks.

In 1926 the Weehetonga Camp Fire Girls had planted the Scotch and Norway pines which today provide a cathedral-like setting to the central portion of Munsinger Gardens. When the Parks Board decided to move the "timekeeper's cabin" to its current Munsinger Gardens site, this cabin was where the WPA workers logged in and received their paychecks. A fireplace and chimney were added.

Under Joseph's supervision, the pits for the lily pond and the natural spring-fed pool (now known as the "chain-link pool") were dug in 1933. The building of the rock garden and the ponds began in 1934 and was completed in 1935. A fountain was placed in the center of the lily pool. A wishing well was added. Stones outlined the paths in the Garden. Meandering curved lines among the flowers and paths reflect the gentle

energy and continuous movement of the Mississippi River. Four thousand feet of paths were built and over one thousand yards of clay and black dirt were added to the area. Until recently, impatiens and begonias were used generously in areas of deep shade to lighten spaces with their bright colors. Red salvia were and are used for the rock wall. (Other flowers and plants have varied from year to year).

Munsinger built granite walls because granite had become one of the primary industries in the area. At one time Saint Cloud was known as the "nitty, gritty granite city." All the granite used in the construction of Munsinger Gardens comes from within a ten-mile radius of the site.

A greenhouse was built in 1939 just south of Munsinger Gardens as a place to grow and cultivate the flowers for all the Saint Cloud parks. (In 2009, the original greenhouse was replaced by the four greenhouses in use today. These four greenhouses are used solely for plants and flowers in the Munsinger Clemens Gardens.)

Although Joseph Munsinger himself had no formal training as a horticulturalist, he loved flowers and possessed an innate sense of quality, which was essential for establishing and maintaining successful gardens. He designed several flower beds in Munsinger Gardens to form diamonds, stars, and hearts. One of the two heart-shaped beds that were included in the original design remains today near the northern entrance to Munsinger Gardens. When he died in 1946, Munsinger was hailed by the *Saint Cloud Daily Times* as "the father of Saint Cloud's park system and is credited with the development of Saint Cloud's parks into treasured beauty spots for the city."

(Information in this article is part of the new book *The Munsinger Clemens Gardens—The Jewel of St. Cloud* by Stephen Fuller.)

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Book Review

by Idella Moberg

Marta McDowell. *Emily Dickinson's Gardens: A Celebration of a Poet and Gardener*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004, 2005. 176 pages. Available in hardcover and Kindle.

Marta McDowell is a gardener and a writer who lives in Chatham, New Jersey. She lectures on garden topics and teaches landscape history and horticulture at the New York Botanical Garden. She is particularly interested in authors and their gardens. In 2010, a show inspired by McDowell's book opened at New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx. The idea was to show the links between Dickinson the horticulturalist with Dickinson the poet. Emily's garden was recreated, installed between reproductions of the home where she was born and died and of her brother's house next door. Emily's poems were also installed among the flowers. Marathon readings of her poems were conducted there.

The format of this book follows the seasons of a garden, beginning in early spring and ending in winter. In each season McDowell gives us catalogues of flowers and plants that would be blooming or needed planting at the time. She tells us what Emily and her sister

Book Event — *The Munsinger/Clemens Gardens—The Jewel of St. Cloud.*

New publication presenting history and photographs of the Gardens

Author: Stephen Fuller, retired professor, Saint Cloud State University, and supporter of Munsinger and Clemens Gardens

Date: Saturday May 2, 1:30-3:30 pm

Place: Lake George Municipal Building, 1101 7th Street S.

Come to hear stories and see pictures of the Gardens. Copies of the book will be available for sale.

Vinnie would be doing in the garden, the trees their brother Austin planted, and what might be occurring at home or about town in Amherst, New York.

From McDowell the gardener we learn "tips" for techniques like how to plant a crocus or share lily of the valley, how to care for lilacs, drainage for a rose bush, a recipe for a manure "tea," how to help a fuchsia to bloom better, deadheading, hedges, how to make currant wine, how to plant a tree, dividing perennials, how to grow figs, bringing plants inside for the winter, a plant history of oak. "Primers" teach the reader how to create a herbarium, how to force bulbs, among other gardening projects.

Through personal letters among the Dickinson family and friends and through Emily's poetry, McDowell has introduced us to a real life gardener who is also an amazing poet. Illustrations and photos give us a visual glimpse into

the life of Emily Dickinson, of her family and friends, and of Amherst where she lived. She shows us how Dickinson's poetry grew organically out of her garden, where she planted and pruned and watered and dug

At the end of the book are endnotes, an extensive list of resources if you'd like to grow the flowers that Emily grew, and an index.

This is the second book by Marta Dowell that I have reviewed for this Newsletter. The first is *Beatrix Potter's Gardening Life*, published by Timber Press in 2014. These books are well documented, well written, and interesting for readers who are interested in historical gardens and gardeners. Currently she is researching her next book about American landscape history, featuring horticultural interests of the presidents, their spouses, and their gardeners. If you are interested in gardening history, Marta McDowell delivers.

UPCOMING GARDEN EVENTS

Rose Education Day: Saturday morning, April 25. Sponsored by Granite City Rose Society and Stearns County Master Gardeners. The event is free, but you must preregister. Call 320-255-6169 or go to the website at z.umn.edu/RoseEd2015 to register online.

Schedule: registration/check-in 8:15-8:30 am, classes 8:30-11:45 am.

Speakers: Jim Beardsley, ARS Master Consulting Rosarian on "Soil and Fertilizers," Jack Falker, Twin Cities Rose Club, on "How to Fertilize & Amend Your Soil pH with Coffee Grounds," and Thomas Roi, ARS Consulting Rosarian, on "Miniature Rose Care."

Saint Cloud Flower and Garden Club Plant Sale: Friday May 15, 8:30-11:00 am or when plants are gone. Whitney Senior Center, 1527 Northway Drive, Saint Cloud. Come early for best selection of perennials, annuals, vegetables, and more, grown by Garden Club members. Club members are available to help with plant selection and answer questions.

Stearns County Master Gardener Plant Sale and Great Garden Get Together: Saturday May 16, 8:30-11:00 am at Riverside Park Pavilion, 1725 Kilian Blvd. SE, Saint Cloud. Plant sale with perennials, annuals, vegetables, and more, grown by Master Gardeners. See demonstrations and ask your questions at information booths.

Flower and Rose Show: Monday July 13 at Whitney Senior Center, 1527 Northway Drive, Saint Cloud. This is a combined show sponsored by Saint Cloud Flower & Garden Club and Granite City Rose Society. The public is invited to enter the show. Email dkeiser@charter.net for a copy of the rose and flower show schedules. Entries are accepted and placed from 7:30 am to 9:45 pm, and the show will be open for public viewing after judging and awards from 1:00 to 5:00 pm.

Tour of Local Gardens: Monday July 20, organized by the Saint Cloud Flower & Garden Club and open to the public. Meet at 5:30 pm at the Whitney Senior Center east parking lot, 1527 Northway Drive, Saint Cloud, to receive directions to this self-guided tour and to arrange car pool.



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St. Cloud, MN 56302
www.munsingerclemens.com

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Coordinator & Editor
Donna Gorrell • 252-8834
dgorell@stcloudstate.edu

Layout & Design
Jill Lucas Design • 743-4471
jill@jillucasdesign.com

www.MunsingerClemens.com

Update on the Virginia Clemens Rose Gardens

by Joan Andersen

When I stopped at the Greenhouse recently to see what is planned for the Rose Garden this year, Rose Specialist Deb Keiser informed me that she is expecting shipment of 309 new roses this year. Since the Rose Garden always looks fully occupied to me, I asked her where all those new roses would find a home.

Deb has a map ready, showing where all of them will be planted. Many will go in Virginia Clemens Rose Garden to replace older plants that have declined or died. Others will go in adjacent gardens known as Upper Test and Lower Test Rose Gardens. Deb has continued to add roses to other areas of the Gardens such as the Clemens Memorial Dome and the color-themed gardens where they will be combined with flowers of the same color—white, yellow, red, blue, and purple. There are roses in most of the sunny areas of the Gardens.

The majority of the plants are shipped "bare root" starting in mid-March. They are unpacked, soaked in water, and have their roots pruned to fit in a large pot. When they are potted, they are pruned to remove any damage and to cut the tops back to outward facing buds so the canes grow correctly. Finally they are moved to the greenhouse and watered well. New growth will start soon. When the weather is warmer, roses are moved to a sheltered area outside the greenhouse to begin "hardening off" before they are planted in the bright sun and wind in the Rose Garden. Planting will start in May—it takes a while to plant 309 roses!