



**Historical Highlights - 1985
of the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary
and The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc.**

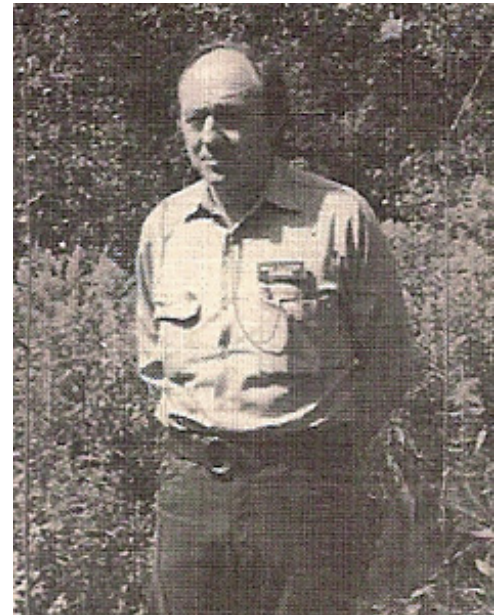
Winter 1984-1985

In the winter of 1984-85, temperatures fluctuated above and below the average range toward the end of 1984 and precipitation decreased with virtually none in November and very little snow in December leaving only a 2" snow depth going into 1985. Early 1985 was entirely different. Snowfalls occurred regularly in January and February providing adequate snow depth for the plants until the end of February. Late January and the first half of February had a majority of the days with temperatures well below average with a minus 29 on Jan. 29th. This changed in the last half of February with most days being above average with a huge 12" snowfall occurring after the 1st of March.

In late 1984 (December 4) four members of The Friends (President Pat Thomesen, Natalie Adler, Betty Bridgman and Betty Bryan) met with Park Board staff to air concerns of The Friends for the future care and development of the Wildflower Garden. This would be a subject that would occupy future Board Members also. The consensus of the group was that their ideas were listened to. In preparation for the Annual Meeting to be held on May 18, Board member and Gardener Ken Avery agreed to chair the Friends Nominating Committee.

Spring 1985

In the Spring issue of the Friends newsletter, *The Fringed Gentian*[™], Friends President Pat Thomesen reported that recruiting for volunteers was underway. Volunteer coordinators were Shirley Schultz and Joyce Smeby. (Shirley would continue in this volunteer position until 2005). Editor Betty Bridgman printed a report from the Naturalists who had worked in the Garden in 1984. In April, Gardener Ken Avery was interviewed on public radio station KSJN and the Friends held a "Garden Potluck" at the Martha Crone Shelter.



Gardener Ken Avery



Shirley Schultz - 2000 photo

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Friends was held May 18th at the Martha Crone Shelter. Elected to the full board of directors were: Natalie Adler, Cindy Berg, Betty Bridgman, Elizabeth Bryan, Emil Elftmann, Catherine Ordner, Liz Pomeroy, Shirley Schultz, Joyce Smeby, Gloria Miller, Patricia Thomesen. Ex-officio member: Kenneth Avery. Martha Crone as honorary life member.

Gardener Ken Avery reported that everything in the Garden was “ridiculously early” compared to 1984 when everything was only “unseasonably early” and that there had been fewer bird migrants than usual through the Garden. Certainly the weather had much to do with that: Daily temperatures in March, April and the first half of May were well above average with a number of days in April above 80 degrees. Precipitation was good also: There was another 12 inch snowfall in early April and good rains in May and June.

Garden Hours: Following the successful test in 1984 of a later closing time for the Garden, in 1985, the season began with the daily Garden-open hours being 7:30 AM till Dusk, which schedule has been followed ever since. Besides the volunteer help in the Shelter, Ken had four naturalists to help: Linda Buehring and Laurie Haugen returned from the 1984 season and they were joined by David Rafferty and David Eitzman. They staffed the Shelter on weekends and evenings. The Park Board’s Foreman of Horticulture, Dan Hasty, would report confiscating from rogue pickers, trash bags full of fiddle heads from Ostrich Ferns.

At the Board of Directors meeting following the annual meeting, Patricia Thomeson was reelected President; Emil Elftmann - Vice President; Elizabeth Bryan - Secretary; and Natalie Adler - Treasurer. In other slots: Cindy Berg was Historian and Memorials chair; Liz Pomeroy was membership chair; and Catherine Ordner as grants chair. This is the first time that membership duties had been split off from the Secretary’s duties into a separate membership job.

Summer 1985

This year the Friends Board approved a “**small grants**” program for applicants who were pursuing some study of the natural world. By the end of the year, 15 small dollar grants would be made - one to a national Audubon Camp, six to college students (\$200 each) and eight to students at the Minneapolis Public Schools Agribusiness Center (\$50 each): Total costs - \$1,985. Names of winners are listed in the June Newsletter (Vol. 33 No. 2). The Friends had established two study grant programs in 1978: One would be to establish scholarships for a few high school students to pursue the natural sciences. The second was to make tuition grants for grade school teachers in the Minneapolis Public School system to take a Nature Study course or an Audubon camp each summer.

Station WCCO and Mpls/St. Paul Magazine were doing a daily selection called “**Summer Pleasures**” and August 20th was the day that The Garden was featured. The Friends would help host the event and tours would be given in the Upland Garden.



Ostrich Fern fiddleheads (*Matteucia struthiopteris*)

trillium by Lon Miller
what we know cannot keep us alive
nor do we survive one moment to
rest in the next
forgive me
when these words came to me
i wanted to walk far back into the
woods
lie down by the muskrat's pond
and let trillium grow through my
back.

*The Fringed Gentian*TM reported on much of this including the positive result of a search for lost issues of the newsletter. Lon Miller's poem "Trillium" was published. You can read other poems of his in "Poets Corner" in the web site archive.

The weather in the summer months moderated as if frequently does and average temperatures fluctuated above and below the normal range infrequently. There was reasonable rain including one rainfall of almost 2.5 inches in mid-August.

Autumn 1985

In *The Fringed Gentian*TM notice was given of the death of Wilbur H. Tusler, at age 94 on August 14th past. Mr. Tusler (details on website) was a noted Twin Cities architect, member of the Friends, donor and chairman of The Friends Building Committee for the Martha Crone Shelter in 1968-1970.

At the fall meeting of The Friends Board of Directors, Park Board Foreman of Horticulture (a position that oversaw maintenance of the Garden), Dan Hasty, discussed maintenance projects for the Garden:

- a. Improved signage near the main gate with a directional map off the premises and Garden regulations posted. (These latter two were placed at the top of stairs leading to the front gate.)
- b. An outdoor display unit for when the shelter was not open (a recommendation of The Friends).
- c. A revised Guidebook (the 1987 version)
- d. An improved entrance box to hold the guidebooks.



Above: Main Entrance Sign

Below: 1987 Guidebook

The Friends provided a Grant to the Garden of \$1,000 for new plant acquisition. The cost of mailing an issue of *The Fringed Gentian*TM was 8 cents.

Weather: In mid-November temperatures began to plummet compared to seasonal averages with hardly any days that were toward the upper normal range; this lasted until the end of the year. Many days in November and December were 15 to 25 degrees below average. Nevertheless there were some good snowfalls in November including one of 8.5 inches and with the low temperatures good snow depth for the plants was maintained with 12 inches still on the ground at the end of the year.



Photo at the beginning: The Upland Garden in mid summer.

References:

*The Fringed Gentian*TM, newsletter of The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc.

Vol. 35, # 1, March 1985, Betty Bridgman, Editor

Vol. 35, # 2, June 1985, Betty Bridgman, Editor

Vol. 35, # 3, August 1985, Betty Bridgman, Editor

Vol. 35. # 4, Sept. 1985, Betty Bridgman, Editor

Minutes of Meetings of The Board of Directors of The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc. - various 1985

Historical Climatology of Minneapolis-St. Paul Area by Charles Fisk.

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