

Elizabeth Ann Schutt (1903-1999) and The Friends of the Wild flower Garden, Inc.

Background:

Each year The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden receive a distribution from The Mendon F. Schutt Family Fund, a foundation created by Elizabeth Ann Schutt and which is administered by The Minneapolis Foundation. Miss Schutt died on April 10, 1999 (Eloise Butler's death was on a April 10th also). The Fund is named for her father who died March 29, 1952. Elizabeth was the only surviving member of the family.

Mendon F. Schutt and Clara Schutt:

Mendon Schutt joined his father Julius' real estate firm, Schutt Realty, in 1895. After his father died he ran the business until his death. The firm was a realty company and a mortgage and insurance brokerage. He built a house at 2100 James Ave. So, Minneapolis, as a wedding gift for his new bride, Clarissa (Clara). Daughters Elizabeth and Harriet were raised here and the family never moved after the house was first occupied.

Elizabeth Ann Schutt:

Elizabeth (Betsey) Ann Schutt was a longtime member of The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden (1970 to 1999) and other organizations. She was cognizant of the important role played by non-profits in community well being. While not necessary an active participant in many organizations she quietly supported many as the bequest to the Minneapolis Foundation shows (see below). The large table in the Martha Crone Shelter was a gift from her in memory of her mother Clara (Clarissa) M. Schutt. Elizabeth was in the first group of volunteers to staff the new Martha Crone shelter in 1970.(1)

We know from conversations that Elizabeth had with Friend's President Cay Faragher during the construction of the Martha Crone Shelter, that Clara Schutt was a great friend of Eloise Butler. Miss Butler obtained various plants for the Wildflower Garden from "Schutt's Farm" or "Schutt's Forty". As to whether it was actually a farm or simply a large backyard garden, we must remember that Eloise would apply interesting names such as "farm" and "gardens" to places where she was able to frequently obtain plant material. In the case of the Schutt family it was probably both a garden and a farm as the family owned 40 acres in Eden Prairie Township where Purgatory Creek flowed into the Minnesota River. The family kept this property until 1914. (2)

We can also state that Elizabeth knew both Eloise Butler and Martha Crone. As Elizabeth was born on Dec. 24, 1903 she would have been acquainted with her mother's friend, Eloise Butler, as Elizabeth would have been in her 30th year when Eloise died and since Clara lived until Nov. 25, 1968, (b. Oct. 21, 1872) (just as plans were being laid by The Friends for the Martha Crone Shelter in the Garden), then it's probable that Clara also knew Martha Crone. That long

legacy of acquaintance with the Garden and its early curators undoubtedly was the background for the bequest made by Elizabeth to The Friends.

Here is the background announcement as made by the Minneapolis Foundation in 1999:

The Minneapolis Foundation Receives \$14 Million Bequest

"Longtime Minneapolis resident Elizabeth Ann Schutt has left the bulk of her estate, estimated at \$14 million, to The Minneapolis Foundation to establish the Mendon F. Schutt Family Fund. The bequest is one of the largest in the foundation's history. Schutt died last April at age 96, and named the Fund after her father. A portion of the Fund will provide income to 70 charities selected by Schutt in the areas of education, religion, nature, the arts, health and human services. But the majority of the Fund will be available to the foundation for discretionary grant making. "This is a remarkable bequest," says Emmett D. Carson, president and CEO of The Minneapolis Foundation. "And the more we learn about Elizabeth Schutt, the more we understand what a remarkable person was behind it. From all accounts, she understood from an early age that what's important in life is sharing. Described by friends and family as someone who was politically astute, socially aware and continually modernizing her ideas, she was somewhat shy and spent most of her time quietly giving away her money to a wide variety of worthy causes."

References:

Information compiled May 2009 and March 2010, by Gary Bebeau,
Friends of the Wild Flower Garden Memorials Chair.

(1) Report by Friends President Cay Faragher, *The Fringed Gentian*TM Fall 1970

(2) Reported by Martha Hellander from an interview with Elizabeth Schutt on May 17, 1988.

All other information from the public records and from the records of The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc.