Fast becoming a yearly occurrence, Quarryhill’s executive director has once again been recognized with a distinguished honor, following closely behind last year’s conferring of the Eloise Payne Luquer Medal by the Garden Club of America. Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania has awarded its prestigious Scott Garden and Horticulture Medal and Award for 2010 to Bill McNamara. As described at its inception in 1929, the award’s purpose is “...to promote a greater love of nature, make the nation more conscious of the beauty of the outdoors (and) arouse a wider interest in better planting and more beautiful gardens among all citizens.”

Margaret Scott Moon and her husband, Owen Moon, Jr., dedicated this yearly-bestowed medal and cash prize to Margaret’s brother and Swarthmore alumnus, Arthur Hoyt Scott, after his death in 1927. Award recipients would be individuals or institutions that have “... made an outstanding national contribution to the science and art of gardening.” Arthur Scott, president of his family’s Scott Paper Company in the 1920’s, was an avid horticulturist and garden lover, particularly fond of irises and peonies and active in societies promoting these floral favorites.

Bill’s efforts as a collector, explorer, botanist and conservation advocate have all contributed to this great honor. Over the course of nearly 25 annual expeditions to East Asia, his achievements not only include several thousand wild-origin seed collections, but also the bridging of shared interests, between east and west, among individuals devoted to the legacy and survival of Asia’s priceless flora. Scientists, plant collectors, garden professionals and amateur plant lovers from numerous disciplines have benefited greatly from Bill’s keen interest in plant conservation and education.

By virtue of his exhaustive search for native seed, his knowledge of East Asian habitats and their oft-threatened cache of indigenous species is unequalled among the plant hunters of today, and harkens back to the golden age of collectors, conjuring names such as E. H. Wilson, F. Kingdon Ward and George Forrest. As described by Pacific Horticulture editor Richard Turner, Bill “...has become one of the foremost American ambassadors to Asia. He has partnered with other gardens in

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Chinese Heritage Rose Garden

An interpretive Rose Garden, long a dream at Quarryhill, is now actively on its way to becoming a reality. A capital campaign to raise the $40,000 cost of the garden was announced at the Fireside Chat, featuring rosarian Bill Grant, in late February. The campaign was soon heavily subscribed, with a $20,000 donation from the Taicang Agricultural Commission near Shanghai, China, arranged by Quarryhill supporter Dean Chen, as well as an unsolicited $5,000 donation from former director Willa Mundell and her husband, Ned. In addition, three Quarryhill patrons had subscribed an initial $1,500 at last year’s Spring Celebration, and $3,300 was recently donated after the Fireside Chat.

This unique addition to Quarryhill’s rich legacy of botanical wonders will be located just east of the main office and will create a seamless continuum, connecting the main office,

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Volunteer Views  -Anne Peden, QBG Volunteer

The buses arrive, the docents are ready, the doors open and out pile very happy and somewhat trepidatious 5th graders. They are outside, out of their school desks, away from their books and are going somewhere they have never been before. An adventure lies ahead.

We divide up into small groups of 6 or 7 children per docent and several parents/volunteers. Each docent has a basic outline of what curriculum elements to cover on the 2-hour tour, but the overall focus is up to the docent. The students are given explorer packs with maps of Asia and Quarryhill, a ruler, magnifying glass and an explorer workbook to draw their botanical observations. Then we head up the hill and into the garden.

I’ve found that it’s best to be open to the children’s interests. I have one group of artists, who are most interested in drawing. So we gather many different-sized and -shaped leaves as we move through the garden. Then, at the upper picnic table they draw in their notebooks and we talk about why each leaf is so different and what it might tell us about the plant in the wild. Another group becomes fascinated with the wild strawberries and rose hips, and we begin crushing leaves to find the aromas and think about which might have been food sources. Along the way we encounter Sal, head gardener, and he demonstrates how to put a new plant in the ground in a way that gives it the best chance to succeed. The students also have questions for Sal like “how did you get this great job?” and “what’s it like to be a gardener?”

On our way out of the garden, all the children get to plant their own seed, a fava bean, and take it home with instructions on how to care for it. Corey, botanist and nursery manager, asks them to send him photos of the plants that grow from the seeds they sowed. He hints that there just might be a prize for the best photo.

Then, lunch and much conversation and questions about what they have seen and experienced in the garden. I have several kids say “this is just the best field trip I’ve ever been on!”

Perhaps we docents have just planted another seed.

Projects Update

Visitor/Education Center

Construction has started on the Visitor Center, which will also double as an education facility for children’s tours. Demolition of the old building exterior has been completed, and the existing steel frame cleaned and painted. New steel exterior skin, French doors, windows, insulation, electrical, lighting and exterior trellises will all be installed over the coming weeks. The Visitor Center is expected to be completed and open to the public sometime this spring. Maps, photographs, and interpretive displays will be installed in the center over the course of several months. Eventually, we expect the Visitor Center to serve as the central check-in point for the garden, and to contain a small gift shop and perhaps a plant sales area.

Rare Maple Grove

Work has also commenced on the Rare Maple Grove, in which Quarryhill will conserve the very endangered Asian maple Acer pentaphyllum. Trenching for irrigation and initial road work has been done, the water storage tank and irrigation system will go in soon, and the trees will be planted thereafter. The Rare Maple Grove will be formally dedicated sometime in July.

Rose Garden  (Continued from page 1)

the new Visitor Center and the actual garden entrance. The aptly named Chinese Heritage Rose Garden will highlight the ancestors, many thriving here at Quarryhill, of our treasured modern-day roses. Most importantly, the garden will feature Rosa chinensis var. spontanea from central China, and Rosa odorata var. gigantea, native to India, Burma and SW China, the two principal parents of all Teas, Hybrid Teas, Floribundas, Portlands, Noisettes, Bourbons, Polyanthas, and many other highly-valued rose varieties developed over the last two centuries. Longtime Quarryhill supporter and local landscape architect Don MacNair designed the Chinese Heritage Rose Garden. Don’s design includes an entry arbor and a circular garden area terraced into the gentle slope, containing four rose quadrants. Featured in these quadrants will be the four infamous “Stud China” roses. These are the four Chinese hybrids that made their way to England via a tea ship over two centuries ago, and which contain those invaluable genetic traits, born of their two aforementioned parents, that made their way into today’s many garden descendents.
My choice for a favorite tree seems to change almost weekly, sometimes even daily. But one has currently held my impatient mind longer than normal. It is a tree with so many admirable qualities that I think everyone should try to find a place for it in their gardens. Though widely available in the nursery trade, it is also a tree that may soon be extinct in the wild. Imagine a tree that blooms after the danger of frosts, has pristine white twelve-centimeter wide flowers with brilliant crimson-red stamens that hang like bright lanterns, has an elegant rich fragrance, doesn’t get too big, and is named after the indefatigable plant hunter E. H. Wilson. Of course, I’m thinking of *Magnolia wilsonii* (Finet & Gagnep.) Rehder, an endangered tree native to China occurring in western Sichuan, northern Yunnan and western Guizhou. Habitat loss and fragmentation have caused its numbers in the wild to decrease to a dangerously low level. It is found in mixed forests between 1900 and 3300 meters elevation. Much of its habitat, once one of the richest temperate forests on earth, has been reduced to small areas too steep to clear for agriculture. Another threat to its survival in the wild is demand for its bark due to its medicinal qualities. It is frequently used as a substitute for the bark of *Magnolia officinalis*. For centuries in China, bark from several magnolia species has been used to clear head and chest congestion and for intestinal relief, while flower buds of many species have been used to relieve sinus congestion.

*Magnolia wilsonii* is in a curious group of four magnolias in the section Oyama. In fact, recently some botanists have placed them in the newly created genus *Oyama* (Nakai) N.H. Xia & C.Y. Wu, though here at Quarryhill we have no intention of making this change. They are all deciduous, flower as the trees are coming into or in leaf, and have pendant fragrant blossoms. They are indigenous to East Asia, with *Magnolia sieboldii* occurring in Japan, Korea and China, *Magnolia globosa* occurring in Bhutan, India, Myanmar and southwest China, and *Magnolia sinensis* found only in Sichuan, China. Of these, I have collected seeds and voucher specimens in the wild of *Magnolia sieboldii* and *Magnolia wilsonii*. Although I have searched, I have not yet seen the other two in the wild.

*Magnolia wilsonii* was one of our targets during an expedition last fall to western and southern Sichuan, with funding from the Franklinia Foundation. We were assisted in the planning and coordination of the expedition by Professor Tang Ya of Sichuan University in Chengdu, Sichuan. Corey Barnes, Quarryhill’s Nursery Manager, Andy Hill, Curator of the David C. Lam Asian Garden at the University of British Columbia Botanical Garden, and Joanna Welti, along with Zhang Liyun, a graduate student at Sichuan University, accompanied me during the month-long fieldwork. Our primary goal was to find and collect seeds of plants in the magnolia family, of which there are 20 different species that occur in Sichuan. We did see a few individuals of *Magnolia wilsonii* on Luoji Shan in southern Sichuan, but they were all without seed. Unfortunately for us, it was a dreadful seed year, and although we found several different magnolia species, only one tree of *Magnolia sargentiana* had seed. The journey was not a total loss, as we did manage to make over 100 collections that will be important new additions to Quarryhill and UBC Botanical Garden. We speculated that the poor seed year was due to stormy weather during flowering and a longer, more severe summer rainy season than usual.

It is possible that some of the trees may have had their flower buds stripped and sold for medicine. During the expedition, we saw several large trays filled with magnolia flower buds for sale on Emei Shan. I have seen this many times over the years in China. In the fall of 1996, while in northern Guizhou with Tony Kirkham, Head of the Arboretum at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Mark Flanagan, Keeper of the Gardens at Windsor Great Park, and Charles Howick, Director of the Howick Arboretum, we came upon a very large old *Magnolia sprengeri*. While walking around the tree looking for seeds, before making the effort to climb, a villager approached us and asked what we were doing. After we told him, he said that we wouldn’t find any seed as they had removed all the...
Magnolia wilsonii  (Continued from page 3)

flowers while in bud and sold them for medicine.

The first time that I collected seed of *Magnolia wilsonii* was in the fall of 1992 on Niba Shan in western Sichuan. Hans Fliegner and Martin Staniforth from Kew, and Charles Howick and I were on our way to Muli in southwestern Sichuan. Our guide from the Chengdu Institute of Biology at the Chinese Academy of Sciences had told us that it occurred on Niba Shan, so we stopped on our way to take a look. We hunted for hours through dense forests and finally came upon one good-sized, ten-meter high tree. After a thorough search of the tree, we found only one fruit with six good seeds. We divided these three ways and found out later that Kew successfully germinated one seed, Howick one, and Quarryhill only one. I went over the same mountain two years later in the fall of 1994, this time with Charles Erskine and Hans Fliegner from Kew, and Charles Howick. We were all shocked to see the area where we had found the magnolia two years before completely denuded and being planted with a monoculture of spruce.

We did manage to make a seed collection of *Magnolia wilsonii* later during that expedition in 1994. On our return to Chengdu, we decided to stop at Luoji Shan. Unlike my recent visit there, this time we were on the other side of the picturesque range. This was long before Luoji Shan became a Nature Reserve. Now there are stone steps and even a cable car bringing thousands of tourists up into this botanical paradise. I first visited Luoji Shan with Charles Howick in 1990 and hadn’t noticed any magnolias then. On that first visit we had started from a small Yi village and climbed for days with porters and horses carrying our gear over the rugged steep mountains. However, on our second visit, despite torrential rain, we spotted an area that we had overlooked before just above the village. Here, there were several *Magnolia wilsonii*, though few had seed. Our frustration with the lack of seeds was further exacerbated by their failure afterward to germinate.

That one seed that germinated from our 1992 expedition is now a healthy, three-meter high tree at Quarryhill, as wide as it is tall. Growing in Sonoma Valley in our rocky acidic soil, under mostly sun with a little light shade from a *Toona sinensis*, it flowers heavily and consistently year after year. I frequently bring visitors to see it, not just for its beauty and delightful fragrance, but more importantly to tell the story of how it is disappearing from the wild. When Wilson first saw this magnolia in 1904, he noted that it was quite common. Now listed as endangered in BGCI’s Red List of Magnoliaceae, this species, like so many others in the magnolia family, has a doubtful future.

And like many other curious examples of plants that we adore and love to grow, *Magnolia wilsonii* might survive longer in cultivation than in the wild.

References
Perennials at Quarryhill  -Corey Barnes, Nursery Manager

Quarryhill is home to a cast of many horticultural characters. *Magnolia amoena* (Tian magnolia), *M. biondii* (Chinese willow-leaf magnolia), and *M. ilicifolia* have begun flowering. *Camellia japonica* and *C. reticulata* are already well into their season. The uniquely tubular, red flowers of *Rhododendron spinuliferum* are out, reminding us of the wonderful variation that exists in our natural world. The coming spring will also bring us flowers on cherries, a dove tree, roses, and maples, among many others. If you haven’t seen the subtle flowers of the maple, you’re in for a pleasant surprise.

To the Quarryhill visitor, our many flowering trees and shrubs may likely be the focus for a return. In addition to these great reasons to take a garden walk, many worthwhile herbaceous perennials fill spaces between the larger, woody individuals. The next four months will be the garden’s most colorful of the year, and with flower colors that span the spectrum, our stunning, smaller-statured herbaceous specimens should not be snubbed.

Presented here are a few for which you may want to search. *Iris ensata*, the Japanese iris, can be found along the driveway that passes in front of the nursery on the way toward the parking lot, and in several large areas around the garden, including the bed surrounding the memorial fountain dedicated to Quarryhill’s founder, Jane Davenport Jansen. This iris finds its origins in China and Japan, and Quarryhill has wild accessions from the islands of Hokkaido, Honshu, and Kyushu. Dark purple flowers with narrow yellow patches on the falling petals stand boldly above narrow green leaf blades. These irises readily form a clump that, in a couple of years, can reach one foot in diameter. Start looking for this one in late April.

At the top of the entry path and surrounding the arbor, stems of *Lilium leucanthum* can reach seven feet in height. Their large, white, fragrant blooms open in May. Before the trumpet-shaped flowers open, the outer surface of the fused tepals displays an attractive, deep purple color. This lily is a Chinese native and Quarryhill has accessions from the provinces of Sichuan and Hubei.

Quarryhill contains several species of *Aquilegia* (columbine). Flower colors range from creamy white to yellow, pink, purple, and a deep red-purple. Past the memorial fountain and overlooking the lower pond, large masses of these plants sport all of these colors. Lacy foliage compliments the delicate appearance of the flowers. Throughout the garden, representative species from both China and Japan exist. Flower buds break in April.

*Dysosma pleiantha*, the Chinese mayapple, is a rare, delicate Chinese native. This species is one of many growing in our redwood troughs near the nursery office. We use these planter boxes to maintain small, sometimes delicate species that may have trouble holding their own in the garden, proper. In May, *Dysosma* (syn. *Podophyllum*) hides its small, dark red flowers under the large, flat leaf blades that stand on erect, sturdy stems. The mayapple is mildly fragrant, but not gently welcoming. Interestingly, this species is in the family Berberidaceae.

In the coming months, the garden will present many more of these small jewels than the few discussed here. *Arisaema* (cobra lily), *Aster, Astilbe* (false spiraea), *Primula* (primrose), *Hylotelephium* (stonecrop), other *Iris* species, and many more await your visit. If you need another reason to come, a familiar pair of Canada geese have just made their annual return to Quarryhill to nest on the large island in the lower pond. Don’t forget the camera!
Scott Medal  (Continued from page 1)

the United Kingdom and the United States, strengthening international relationships while furthering the pursuit of botany, natural history and the conservation of biodiversity.”

Past honorees of this award include many of great renown, including: Liberty Hyde Bailey (1931), prominent horticulturist, botanist and writer in the tradition of Thomas Jefferson; Michael Dirr (1993), horticulture professor and prolific writer on woody plants; J. C. Raulston, who introduced countless new offerings to the horticulture industry; Quarryhill advisor Peter Del Tredici (1999) of the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard University and plant hunter Daniel Hinkley (2003), both plantsmen and collectors of international stature and closely affiliated with Bill’s work; and botanist Peter Raven (2009), director of the Missouri Botanical Garden and a world authority on species conservation, biodiversity and environmental preservation.

It is indeed fitting that Bill joins the ranks of these esteemed and accomplished leaders in the plant world by receiving this award. As stated by local arborist and long-time Quarryhill supporter Ted Kipping, Bill “… more than fulfills the Scott ideal of an explorer/scientist/gardener who has devoted his life and considerable personal energies to the furtherance of botany and horticulture.”

The award presentation took place at the Lang Performing Arts Center of Swarthmore College on March 14 at 4 pm, and included a speech by Bill describing those experiences and passions that have informed his remarkable career.

Congratulations to Bill McNamara and to Quarryhill for this notable life achievement!

“Garden flowers may be larger, but field flowers are stronger.”

---Chinese Proverb