



Fountain flowing again at Maudslay

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As a member of Maudslay State Park's Garden Committee, Spalding has been compelled to help her committee purchase and restore the Italian fountain she recalled once served as the garden's crown jewel. And her wish was realized Saturday when the fountain was unveiled to an appreciative public.

Temperatures Saturday were ideal for a walk in the park, and as guests wandered past the new fountain, through rows of meticulously cared-for dahlias with their boxwood borders, garden committee Chairwoman Sandee Liversidge thanked Spalding and the many donors and volunteers who have helped bring the aged garden back to its former glory.

Liversidge said that though the original fountain was dismantled and removed years ago by a member of the Moseley family, its basin has always remained in place; and due to a generous \$3,000 donation from Spalding, the restored basin and solar-powered fountain replica represent the fruits of the committee's three-year labor of love.

Although Spalding donated the money for the fountain in 2004, it's taken the garden committee three years to secure approval from the Massachusetts Historic Commission and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, said Liversidge. Additional funds were raised to cover the installation of the fountain and the purchase of a solar pump to circulate the water.

The cast-stone fountain replica was purchased at Kenneth Lynch & Son of Wilton, Conn. — a stock item the committee felt represented the likeness and feel of the original fountain. It now serves as the ultimate accompaniment to the refurbished garden that's taken 10 years to cultivate, with the help of countless volunteers and donors.

Establishments like Colby Farm have donated plantings, according to Liversidge, and volunteers like Wanda and Kim Journey donate much of their time to tending them.

"They've made it their mission to see that the boxwoods are kept low enough so that the plantings really pop," said Liversidge.

Liversidge said the garden committee has for many years worked hard to replant and cultivate according to the original design unveiled by Hutcheson so many years ago. And she feels that by keeping colors with like colors and species with like species, all surrounded by a well-pruned boxwood border, the garden more than ever resembles Hutcheson's original design.

"It's the plan of Martha Brookes Hutcheson," said Liversidge. "It's very similar to when the award was won."

Liversidge said the Department of Conservation and Recreation helped refinish the brick walls that surround the gardens, and Landscape Designer Maryann Presley came up with the garden's rehabilitation plan.

"Instead of having a lot of variety, it's color and height," said committee member Ann White.

Spalding is seeing more and more of the formal garden she remembers from her youth, which she recalls was a meticulously tended Eden of sorts.

"This was my walking playground," said Spalding. "The flowers came from all over the world — from Japan and from China. The greenhouses were all glass. This place was kept immaculate."

Spalding recalls how Mr. Gattrell, the Moseley family's head groundskeeper, was diligent about keeping each stone in the walk leading up to the garden swept and tidy. Not just anyone was allowed to roam free on the private property. But Mona and her friends were allowed entrance, because her father, Hugh McLaughlin, worked for Mr. Gattrell and the Moseleys. She'd approach the stone garden house and someone would inevitably stop them before recognizing them and passing them through again.

"It's OK, it's the McLaughlins," they'd say.

Today the stone garden house is in disrepair — perhaps another item that might fall on the garden committee's wish list some day, after the group takes on the task of refurbishing the property's aging courtyard.

"We hope to someday put in gates that will duplicate the gates that Martha Brookes Hutcheson had in here," said Liversidge. "It's going to take a lot of dollars and a lot of letter writing."

Now that the fountain is installed, and on the heels of successfully funding an irrigation system for the garden, the garden committee is seeking a grant to help fund the next big Maudslay project.

"We are hoping we'll be awarded a grant this winter to enable us to renovate the courtyard," said Liversidge.

If successful, the group will bring in a group of students from area schools to help the committee develop a "zero-scape design" for the courtyard, according to Liversidge.

After that, the committee hopes to tackle a variety of projects in and around the estate gardens. But for the time being, the committee is taking pride in its latest accomplishment — the fountain.

"We're just thrilled that this has finally taken place," said Liversidge.

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