



Whitesbog Preservation Trust

NEWSLETTER

1st Quarter

www.whitesbog.org

2013

Birthplace of the Highbush Blueberry - Historic Center for Cranberry Innovation

June Mershon Vail, 1922 - 2012

With this issue, we celebrate the life of June M. Vail who died on November 27, 2012 at the ripe age of 90. June was a companion and assistant to Elizabeth White during the last 10 years of White's life. June was a supporter of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, a noted horticulturalist in her own right and was responsible for conveying much that we know about Elizabeth White's horticultural pursuits at Whitesbog, and for donating many letters and artifacts that belonged to Elizabeth White. A formal obituary by the Wm. H. Clark Funeral Home can be found as part of the online version of this Newsletter. What follows are contributions from members of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust who knew June over her long association with Whitesbog. We start with an interview of June's friend and neighbor, Iris Grubler, done by documentarian Nancy O'Mallon on Jan. 20, 2013.



How did you meet June?

IG: I met June at the Post Office in Analomink (Pennsylvania); I held the door for her. I would then occasionally, coincidentally, run into her there and we started talking. I saw her sitting in her car one day, and I had noticed how difficult it was for her to get in and out, so I asked her if there was something I could do for her in the Post Office, you know, to save her the trip. And she said: "Yeah" and she hands me a set of keys, tells me the number of the Post Office box and said: "Can you get my mail?" And I looked at her and I said (I was scolding her), "You don't just give someone you don't know your whole set of keys!" And she looked at me with those piercing blue eyes and said: "Where ya gonna go?" And I said (laughing), "You got a good point there." And that was the start of a really lovely friendship.

If you were to describe June to someone who never knew her, what would you say?

IG: I would say, what a remarkable woman she was, strong of mind and body, even with her handicap. She was fiercely independent, generous, and warm, with lots of interesting stories. She was just a very special person with a spark in her eye that said mischief.

What was your favorite thing about her?

IG: That's hard. I think it was that look in her eye, that little mischievous look. She was like a child in so many ways. I think that was one of my favorite things about her. Although I have to say, one of the things I find very special is how she lived her life. She lived her life clean and honest with other people. She was a good Christian. And to me she really epitomized that phrase 'A good Christian' because

she lived it. And I admired her. She was humble. She was modest. She didn't want to be recognized for anything. She gave what we call Tzadaka in Hebrew. In my house I have a Tzadaka box ... just a little coin box ... it's a very common traditional thing for all Jews to have. The literal translation is righteousness. But we've loosely translated it to charity. And she would always say to me: "Here's some money for that" and she called it the poor box. I said, "Okay." June had basically filled the box up herself; every time she would come to my house, she would put money in it. Then, when I turned in the box to the Rabbi, I asked if he would please send a note to her, you know, thanking her for her donation. And when I got the note, when it came to me in a letter, and I read it to her, she was upset with me. I said, "Why are you upset? I thought it was so nice!" And she said, "You didn't have to tell him that. You didn't have to tell him that I contributed to that." And I said, "Whoa." Something new I learned about June. She didn't want the recognition. But I was impressed with that.

(continued on page 2)

How do you think she would most like to be remembered?

IG: I think she would most like to be remembered by her work; by all the plants that she literally planted around the Stroudsburg area and many other areas as well, obviously Whitesbog. She would like to be remembered for her family genealogy that she did such extensive work on. A big part of her life was in knowing her family history stretching back to either the 17th or 18th century. For her work, she would want to be remembered for the work that she did. And she so loved her profession. And she was so proud. I would take her for a ride in the car and she'd say "I planted that." There's very

little left of what she planted because of development in our immediate neighborhood, but by the PNC Bank on (Route) 447 they still have holly and she said, "I planted that" and she would just marvel. She would like to be remembered like the nature woman that I think that she was. She was all about plants, she really, really was. It was her passion and she still had the knowledge. She would come to my house and in front of it is a tiny porch with a little space for plants. And she would say to me, "I'm gonna come over and plant" and I would say, "Oh yeah? Knock yourself out." And there I would find her, when I wasn't even home. I'd come home and find her there, bent over, working in the earth.

Is there anything you would like to share about your friendship with June?

IG: Our friendship was very special. We were really friends. We loved each other. It was a mutual feeling of warmth. We laughed a lot. That pleased me a lot and it pleased her. June was just an extraordinary human being.



June Vail (left center) sharing a happy moment with Elizabeth White (right center) and various unknown children (ca. 1950).

With an impish glint in her eye, June bit into the chocolate-covered ice cream bar, looking very much like a little girl who was getting away with doing something naughty. Her friends from Whitesbog had driven up to Analomink on her 90th birthday to surprise her with armloads of flowers and ice cream, and one couldn't say what pleased her more: the gifts or the company. Anyone who ever met June knew immediately that she was inordinately fond of having company, and of sharing her stories and memories. And those memories stayed razor-sharp throughout her life.

The oldest of four children, June was born with hip dysplasia and thus found it difficult to keep up with the others once they learned to run. She often related that her father encouraged her to follow him around the family nursery at his slower pace, and she explained that it was their shared gardening experiences that inspired her to a career in horticulture. In 1942, June graduated from the Ambler School of Horticulture for Women (now part of Temple University). From 1942 to 1945 she worked as a horticulturist for Ambler Nursery.

In 1945, like a dream come true as June recalled it, she was chosen to work for J.J. White in Whitesbog, under the direction of Elizabeth C. White. June was

equal parts enthralled with Miss White's vast horticultural accomplishments, and emotionally drawn to her as a grandmother figure. In late 1945, Miss White had a stroke and June became her personal as well as horticultural assistant. June worked long hours in the fields and greenhouses, and returned to Suningive late each day to assist Miss White with the physical therapy exercises prescribed for her after the stroke. These were June's halcyon days, living and working at Whitesbog, and she was devastated when Miss White passed away in 1954. June couldn't bear to see any trace of Miss White vanish, and so she retrieved discarded personal effects and papers and brought them to her family home in East Stroudsburg.

Although June felt that her life could never be the same, she continued working in the field of horticulture, for W. Atlee Burpee Seed Company from 1954 to 1964, and for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) from 1964 to 1968. At PHS, June planned and planted an 18th century garden. She presented Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson with a plaque for the garden at its dedication. She served at the annual Philadelphia Flower Show, and later, worked as head gardener at Pennsbury Manor in Bucks County, Pa. She owned her own horticultural service.

June was a charter member and served on the board of directors for the American Holly Society. She was also a life member of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, a trustee of Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, a life member and board member of the Pocono Forestry Association, and life member of the Monroe County Historical Association. She received the award of merit from the PHS in 1979, was

named Volunteer of the Year by the Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve in 1989, and was given the Conservation Award from the Pocono Forestry Association in 1992.

June's finest accomplishment may well be her early recognition of the historic importance of the achievements made at Whitesbog by Miss White and her family, and June's tenacious efforts to preserve much of that history. When she sold the family nursery property seven years ago, it was with the understanding that prior to the new owner taking possession, Whitesbog volunteers could empty the barns and house of Whitesbog artifacts and furniture. Because of June's foresight and generosity, the Trust now has Miss White's bedroom set, some of her living room furniture, various personal effects, photographs, and extensive records of Whitesbog and Holly Haven, a truly invaluable legacy.

- Ellen Terry -

It was on a beautiful fall day in the 1970s that I first met June Vail. The late Dr. Eugene Vivian, Director of the Conservation and Environmental Studies Center (CESC) then housed at Whitesbog, and I had just concluded a botanical walk along the cranberry bog dikes. We returned to the Elizabeth C. White Reception Hall (the old General Store) to greet June at the appointed time. She had come to CESC with a donation of two cranberry crates laden with historic Whitesbog photographs, documents, ledgers, letters, magazine and newspaper articles, and memorabilia. During an hour's conversation with June, I learned that she had already made similar and even more significant and extensive donations a number of years earlier.

After the death of Elizabeth White in 1954, it was June's love for Elizabeth that compelled her to "salvage" (more realistically, to preserve) every possible artifact associated with her mentor whom she idolized. We owe June a great debt of gratitude for serving as the self-appointed caretaker of this vast assemblage of historic items. Today the Archives of the Whitesbog Trust would be deemed impoverished without her gargantuan donations.

On another of her occasional visits to Whitesbog, this one in the 1980s, I helped June gather some pine cones and tree clubmoss. She used such native plant materials to artistically fashion ornaments that she would often present as gifts to friends. At Christmas, June, knowing that I was a cranberry historian, surprised me with a first edition of J.J. White's *Cranberry Culture*, one of my most cherished possessions.

- Ted Gordon -

June Mershon Vail was my blueberry history guide and friend. From 1998 to late 2004, I searched for June Vail. No one that I was in contact with seemed to know of her whereabouts. In late 2004, I finally located her and promptly wrote her a letter requesting an interview. Six weeks later I

was overjoyed to receive from her a lovely hand-written response.

The note card was illustrated with early spring flowers in a natural setting and included detailed directions to her log cabin home on Analomink Lake. "When the snow is gone I would be glad to have you come and see me if you can put up with my cluttered cabin" she wrote, adding; "I am unable to go out when it rains or snows. I walk with two canes so I don't lose my balance. I do craft work with cones and seed pods when I can." In her card, June shared with me her phone number and told me she looked forward to my visit when the weather improved. "I have been feeding deer, squirrels and all the winter birds. They need the food when it is so very cold," she'd said. I could not wait to meet her.



Elizabeth C. White, Olive Rossell (ECW's housekeeper), and June Vail outside the Penn(?) diner.

Finding and speaking with June moved me to produce the documentary film about the history of the cultivated blueberry entitled, *The Mighty Humble Blueberry*. Along with the card and directions was a one page photocopied biopic about June that seemed to come from a book of some kind. In the header of the page it read: *Women Who Made History in Monroe County*. At the bottom of the page in June's handwriting was a note: "This is only part of my life." Here are some highlights of June's life as laid out by the writer of the article, Helen A. George, and its researcher, Nancy Shukaitis¹:

- June Mershon Vail was born on January 11, 1922 in East Stroudsburg, PA
- She is a descendant of Jacob Stroud, founder of Stroudsburg
- She is a 1940 graduate of East Stroudsburg High School
- She is a 1942 graduate of Ambler School of Horticulture

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- From 1942-1945 she worked for Ambler Nursery where medical herbs and vegetables were grown and utilized in World War II
- 1945-1954 she worked for Joseph J. White, Inc. under the direction of Elizabeth C. White with blueberries, cranberries and American Holly
- 1954-1964 she worked for W. Atlee Burpee Seed Company
- 1964-1968 she worked for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS). At PHS she planned and planted an 18th century garden and presented Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson with a plaque dedicating the garden
- She is a 1947 charter member and served on the board of directors for the American Holly Society
- 1979 Recipient of the award of merit from the PA Horticultural Society
- 1992 Recipient of the Conservation Award from the Pocono Forestry Association

From the first time we met in the early spring of 2004, I have considered her my friend. A couple times a year, I'd make the trek to her cabin in the woods, and we'd talk at length at least once a month by phone. Whenever I asked, she always graciously agreed to my recording our conversations, knowing it made it easier for me to not have to take notes. I so enjoyed our conversations and her many stories about everything from blueberries to genealogy, from wildlife to runaway wagons in the Stroudsburg of her youth. Invariably, whether I asked her to or not, something always came up about her happy years working for and beside Elizabeth Coleman White. The following are some excerpts from my last on-camera interview with her, December 2011.

- Nancy O'Mallon -

NO: How old were you when you met her (Elizabeth White) for the first time?

JMV: I came right out of Ambler School of Horticulture for Women and it was war years. In those days women were being substituted for the men who were going overseas. We had greenhouses up here (Stroudsburg) and I went down. I had told my mother, I don't want to stay here and my mother said, why? I said, because I'll be stuck in a rut and I won't be able to do anything else. I want to see if I can help more people. They sent me down for an interview and I saw Miss White waiting for me at the bus stop.

NO: What do you think was your most important contribution to the work of Elizabeth White?

JMV: Helping her with the test berries and picking out the different things.

NO: Tell us about your work with Miss White.

JMV: I would come back after we were in the test fields and report to her what we were working with and then wait for her suggestions as to what to go ahead with later. She always had different ideas than I did. And the two of us could substitute different things and it seemed to give a broader picture to the work that either one of us were doing at that time. She treated me like a granddaughter and I always



An incredibly youthful-looking June Vail with young Allison Cadbury.

thought she was more like my grandmother. And I would go out to do different things just to please her. I used to have to lay flat to do the budding when she'd find a variety that she really liked. I'd lay flat, she could sit cross-legged and reach over and do what she wanted with the blueberries.

NO: What was ECW's best quality?

JMV: Patience. She had a lot of patience to try different things.

NO: She worked to the very end of her life?

JMV: She worked to the very end of her life, even from her home. We had an elevator put in so that she could go up and she'd look out at the garden. And she'd

suggest certain things to be done from her window and change the picture. She loved all the different plant materials; she had climbing fern, and different colored irises, and at one point she tried roses. They didn't work.

NO: What can you tell me about her working relationship and what Elizabeth White thought of Dr. Frederick Coville?

JMV: She was very glad to have Dr. Coville. He had been working with blueberries up in New Hampshire. That was his summer home. And she used to send for these bulletins from the government. And she asked Dr. Coville to come and see what he thought of the blueberry work that she was doing. And they found out they could cross the blueberries, but they had to cover them with a cage to keep the insects from carrying away their pollen. And they would pick out a variety that they thought was good. She realized that she'd have to send somebody into the woods to get the largest that they could find. And when they brought them back she would name them for the person if she liked the name. But she found that there were a lot of different things that they needed to learn about anything that they were growing and going to offer to the public.

NO: Did she like Dr. Coville?

JMV: Yes. She felt that he was doing wonderful work.

NO: What do you think she would think about the fact that blueberries are now grown everywhere around the world?

JMV: I think Elizabeth Coleman White would be very pleased to know that something that she worked so hard for was grown so universally everywhere now.

Coles Roberts [a 3rd generation New Jersey apple grower (Jersey Jerry's Orchard, Southampton, NJ), and former Curator of Collections at the NJ Museum of Agriculture] donated a 20-second, 8mm film clip showing Elizabeth White and June Vail standing on the porch of the Paymaster's Office talking to a group of ladies (hats and gloves appropriate for ladies of those times) from the Burlington County Historical Society. Coles' mother was part of the group of ladies.

Then, on one of my searches at the Burlington County Library, I stumbled on an article by a Percy B. Lovell that I believe reports this event. The paper is the Moorestown Chronicle, dated August 3, 1950.²

The article entitled "Genesis of the Cultivated Blueberry at Whitesbog" is pretty long, but one paragraph identifies the group visiting Whitesbog and describes the June that we knew:

"Miss White, kindly and warmly friendly, standing on the porch of the old-time original office building at Whitesbog, with Miss June Vail as a guardian angel nearby and anticipating her every want, told of how Whitesbog originated in 1857 when owned by her grandfather, James Fenwick ..."

- Janet Robbins -

Indeed, June seemed to have an almost cosmic connection with Elizabeth White. In a Whitesbog Preservation Trust Newsletter interview done by Martha Windisch in 2008³, June was quoted as follows:

"The night before the interview, I had a dream and actually dreamed about exactly what Miss White looked like even though I had never met her, seen a photograph of her, or been told what she looked like.

When I arrived at Whitesbog for the interview, I knew right away that this was what I wanted to do. It was like a dream come true. When I first met Miss White, she was exactly like I had dreamed. I loved her from the start. She had her white hair neatly in a bun and waved with a curling iron. She had pearls around her neck. She made her own clothes and wore a blue dress that reminded me of blueberries. She was beautiful.

During the interview, Miss White drove me on a tour of the bogs and fields in her blue Ford. I was not doing much driving myself at the time and I was worried to death about ever learning to drive on the sugar-sand roads that surrounded the bogs.

Part way through the interview, Miss White and her housekeeper had to run to Philadelphia for an appointment, and they left me alone at Suningive. I sat alone and weeded the daylily bed by the road and loved every minute of it. When I found out that I got the job, I moved down to Whitesbog right away."

And thus began the enduring connection between Elizabeth White and June Vail. ■

References

- ¹Brown, Helen G., Mary M. Hemming and Mary Frances Postupack. 1995. Women Who Made History in Monroe County (Monroe County, Pennsylvania); Printing Craftsmen Inc. 338 pp.
- ²Lovell, Percy B.; Genesis of the cultivated blueberry at Whitesbog, (in the column 'Under "THE OLD HAT" of The Country Editor'), Moorestown Chronicle, August 3, 1950.
- ³Windisch, Martha. 2008. Elizabeth White, as told by June Vail. Whitesbog Preservation Trust Newsletter, 2nd Quarter 2008: 1, 4-5.



WHITESBOG EVENT SCHEDULE

For more information call (609) 893-4646, e-mail us at WhitesbogPreservationTrust@comcast.net or visit us on the web at www.whitesbog.org.

April

6 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Have fun with friends, working in the gardens, repairing trails, restocking the General Store and working around the Village. Lunch provided.

6 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.
Stroll the Historic Village, learn about Whitesbog's history, and visit Suningive, Elizabeth White's historic home, the worker's cottages and other buildings of Whitesbog's heritage. \$5 donation/person, reservations requested.

20 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.
Fish Moon. Listen to the night sounds of the Pines, learn about Whitesbog and experience the seasonal changes of the Pinelands. Walks are 3 to 5 miles long, and led by experienced leaders. \$5 donation per person, reservations requested.

21 Emerging Plants Nature Walk 10 a.m.
\$5 donation/person, reservations requested. Explore Suningive's gardens, the nearby bogs and surrounding Pineland areas with botanist, Mark Szutarski to discover and identify native plants as they begin their springtime display.

28 Annual WPT Board Meeting 12 Noon
28 Volunteer Recognition Luncheon 1 p.m.

May

4 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
(See April 6).

4 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.
\$5 donation/person. (See April 6).

11 New Jersey State History Fair 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Visit Whitesbog at this year's history making event - at Washington's Crossing State Park. \$5 per vehicle.

12 Suningive's Gardens 10 a.m.
\$5 donation/person, reservations requested. Join Mark Szutarski to learn about Elizabeth White's unique plant collection and efforts to preserve her gardens, pond and the surrounding pinelands landscape.

18 Whitesbog Founders Day 2 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Join the Board of Trustees, members, and supporters of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust to celebrate the Trust's 30th Anniversary by recognizing Michele Byers and the individuals and organizations who first championed the protection and preservation of historic Whitesbog Village. This is an invitation only event. Please call 609-893-4646 to request an invitation and response card. \$30 per person (member), \$35 non-member.

25 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.
Flower Moon. \$5 donation/person, reservations requested. (See April 20 listing for details).

June

1 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
(See April 6).

1 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.
\$5 donation/person. (See April 6).

22 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.
Strawberry Moon. \$5 donation/person, reservations requested. (See April 20 listing for details).

29 BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

\$8 per carload. Celebrate all things blueberry at this old-fashioned festival. Enjoy blueberry picking, live country music, lots of children's activities, exhibits, great food, historical presentations and tours, pinelands artists and crafters, our famous blueberry pie eating contest and lots more.

July

13 WPT Volunteer Workday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
(See April 6).

13 Whitesbog Village Tour 1 p.m.
\$5 donation/person. (See April 6).

14 Blueberry Tasting 1 p.m.
\$5 donation/person, reservations required. Learn all about Whitesbog's role blueberry cultivation from Mark Ehlenfeldt, Blueberry Geneticist with the UDSA. Sample unique and hard to find varieties and special baked goods.

20 Moonlight Walk 7 p.m.
Buck Moon. \$5 donation/person, reservations requested. (See April 20 listing for details).

The Mission of the Trust is to restore, protect and enhance the land, historic sites, and structures at Whitesbog, and to provide educational materials and interpretive programs that engage visitors in the history, culture, and natural environment of Whitesbog.



Whitesbog Preservation Trust Founders' Day

Celebrate the
Individuals & Organizations
who championed the preservation of
Historic Whitesbog Village

Saturday, May 18, 2013
2 - 5:30 p.m. Tickets required.

Living History Tours, Refreshments & Recognition Program

2013 Board of Trustees

Richard Prickett, Pres. Stephanie Schrader, V.P.
John Joyce, 2nd V.P. Mark Ehlenfeldt, Treas.
Christine Lipsack, Sec.
Ted Gordon Bart Amato Joseph Darlington
Diane Kelly Paul Detrick Jeffery Macechak
Meetings Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.
April 28 (10 a.m., Board of Trustees)
April 28 (Noon - annual membership meeting)

Staff

Susan B. Phillips, Executive Director
Jennifer Rubeo, Bookkeeper/Assistant

Newsletter

Mark Ehlenfeldt & Susan Phillips - Editors

Committees - 2013

Buildings & Restoration - Rick Prickett
Finance - Mark Ehlenfeldt
Fund Development - Susan Phillips
General Store - Steve Young
Marketing & Public Relations - Mark Ehlenfeldt
Interpretative Educ. & Archives - Ted Gordon
Landscape and Garden - Mark Szutarski
Membership & Nominating - Stephanie Schrader
Personnel - Rick Prickett

Plan now for the WPT Founder's Day Celebration

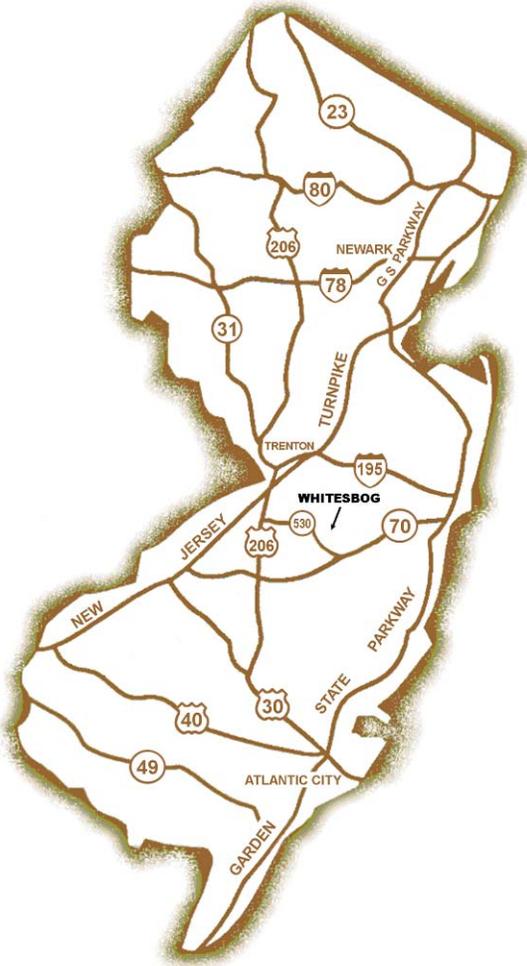
In 1983, Michele Byers challenged the preservation community to save Whitesbog, stating: "Whitesbog is at a very crucial place in its history and needs the concerned attention of all of us in planning for its continued existence as an important reminder of New Jersey's rich agricultural and industrial heritage." Michele rallied concerned organizations, committed individuals and public/private partners to secure support and establish the Whitesbog Preservation Trust. Today, Whitesbog presents a combination of natural and cultural resources: Pine Barrens flora, fauna and ecological treasures, historic structures, artifacts and archival records, engineering works and the continuation of a 156 year family business and agricultural operation. While much remains to be done, the achievements of the past thirty years stand as a tribute to Michele's vision and hard work on behalf of Whitesbog.

Join the Trust for our Founders' Day Celebration, Saturday, May 18, 2013 to recognize Michele Byers and the many individuals and organizations who initially championed the protection and preservation of Historic Whitesbog Village. Tour the Village and learn about the Trust's restoration efforts; enjoy living history presentations in four of the Village's museums; explore Whitesbog's cranberry bogs, blueberry fields, trails and botanical treasures; preview the Whitesbog Village Agricultural Museum in progress. Festivities include: Walking & Living History tours at 2:00 p.m.; Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres & Recognition Program at 3:30 p.m. Call for ticket information 609-893-4646. ■

Funding for the 2013 Whitesbog Blueberry Festival is made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts from a grant to the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Department of Resource Conservation, Division of Parks.

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust has received a General Operating Support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC), a division of the Department of State, for fiscal year 2013, and has also received from the NJHC, a mini-grant for historical research.





Driving Directions:

From NJ Turnpike

Take Exit 7 to Rt. 206 South to intersection of Rt. 206, Rt. 38 and Rt. 530. (Landmarks - Vincentown Diner and White Dotte)

Turn East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13. (Landmarks – You will go through the towns of Pemberton & Browns Mills, passing Burlington County College on the right.)

Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot on the left.

From PA Turnpike

Travel to NJ Turnpike North and follow above instructions.

From 206 South

Travel North to circle intersection with Rt. 70.

Travel East on Rt. 70 to Rt. 530. (Rt. 530 is between mile markers 33 & 34.)

Travel West on Rt. 530 for one mile to mile marker 13.

Turn right onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

From 206 North

Travel South to intersection of Rt. 206, Rt. 38 and Rt. 530.

Turn East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13.

Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

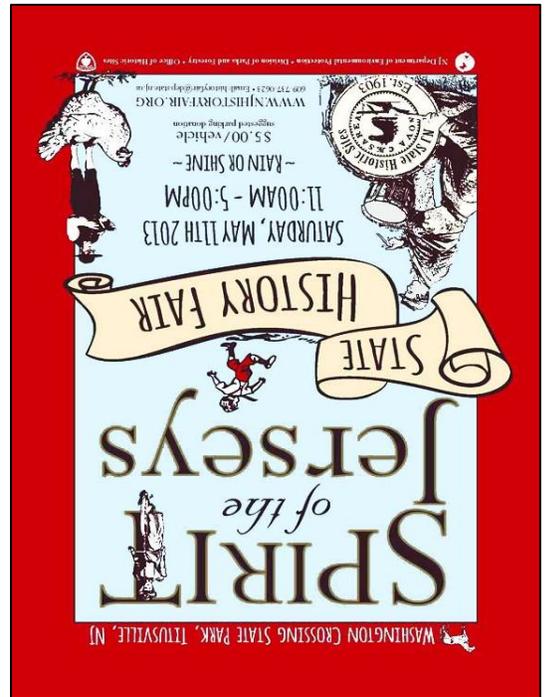
From Philadelphia

From Ben Franklin Bridge, take Rt. 38 East, crossing over Rt. 206 and onto Rt. 530 East.

Travel East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13.

Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

The General Store is across from parking lot. Trust Offices are approximately 1/8 of a mile down the crossroad to the right (at Suningive).



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PDF Extras Start Here

June Mershon Vail

January 11, 1922 - November 27, 2012

Born during a snowstorm on January 11, 1922, to Theodore H. and Mae Lorraine (Decker) Vail, she passed away quietly during the first snow of the season. She was a direct descendant of Jacob Stroud, founder of Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. She grew up on Franklin Hill in East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania at her parents' Orchard Hill Gardens, also known as Vail's Nursery. She met the challenges of life with courage and determination.

She is survived by her brother Laurence N. Vail of Lancaster, PA and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, Theodore H. and Mae L. Vail; brothers, William R. Vail, Sr. and Lynn N. Vail; and longtime companion, Eleanor Genoa.

She graduated from East Stroudsburg High School in 1940 and from Ambler School of Horticulture (now part of Temple University) in 1942. From 1942 to 1945 she worked as a Horticulturist at Ambler Nursery, growing trees and shrubs from seed and cuttings, also growing vegetables and medicinal herbs for use during WWII.

For nine years she worked at Whitesbog, New Jersey for Joseph J. White, Inc. under the direction of Elizabeth C. White, founder of Tru-Blue Blueberry Cooperative. She worked with blueberries, cranberries and American Holly.

In her life as a horticulturist she worked for W. Atlee Burpee Seed Company of Philadelphia, for ten years, and for the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society (PHS) from 1964 to 1968. At PHS she planned and planted an 18th century garden. She presented Mrs. Lyndon Johnson a commemoration plaque for the dedication of the garden. She also grew and prepared flowers for the spring flower show in Philadelphia. She was a specialist on the plants growing in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey and often led trips there and presented slide shows to help educate the interested about the unique plants and wildflowers found there.

Her interests in all things seed and stem provided her with many years of enjoyment as a wild crafter. She taught classes in wild crafting and design. She made evergreen wreaths during the holidays and many items from a large seed and cone collection. Late in life she made and gifted many a "cone critter" to the delight of young and old alike.

June was a charter member of the American Holly Society and many of the older hollies in the Stroudsburg area came from her plantings. She was a life member of Pennsylvania Horticultural Society since 1964, a trustee at Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve since 1972, a life member and board member of the Pocono Forestry Association, and a lifetime member of the Monroe County Historical Association. She left behind an extensive investigation into the family genealogy.

There will be a celebration of her life by family and friends in the spring when the flowers are blooming. The family would like to thank her friends and neighbors for their loving helpfulness in her later years.

Memorial donations can be made to Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve online at www.bhwp.org or by check to: BHWP, PO Box 6851, 1635 River Road, New Hope, PA 18938.