

Volume 3
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Winter 2022



The 75th Anniversary Annapolis, MD, group photo.
Historic London Town & Gardens in Edgewater, MD.

For More Information

We welcome all inquires. All requests for information concerning holly or the Holly Society of America, Inc., should be addressed to the secretary. All technical questions will be referred to the foremost experts in the field.

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HOLLY SOCIETY BERRY BULLETIN

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From the President

Sue Hunter

This year would not be complete without mention of our first in-person National Annual Meeting since the Covid pandemic. Joy, enthusiasm, and gratitude in being able to gather again made up for the lightly attended Meeting held in Annapolis in October. Nestled along the South River located in Edgewater, MD, Historic London Town and Gardens is a twenty-three-acre park featuring cultivated gardens, archeological sites, and renovated period buildings from centuries ago. We couldn't have asked for better weather as our informative tour guides educated us all on the William Brown house, family, workers, servants, and slaves who called the property home. It was gripping and sad to listen to and read about individual personal stories throughout the exhibits on display, as most were there involuntarily and suffered at the whims of their owners. I want to emphasize that most public parks everywhere are becoming increasingly historically accurate and inclusive in their educational outreach. This includes accuracy in geographical botanic regions and taxonomic diversity of plant species in public gardens and arboretums due to increasing public awareness of sustainable landscaping and gardening. Additional Annual Meeting highlights included: walking tours around historic, downtown Annapolis, dinner on your own with friends, a fantastic educational program featuring George Mayo, Stanton Gill and David Clement, Nursery Industry advocates and University of Maryland Entomology, IPM and Plant Pathology

experts, a 75th Anniversary dinner followed by keynote speaker Daniel Fenton, Jr., and finally the Wolf-Fenton Award presented to and received by Bert Hendley. All in attendance appreciated and participated in the Silent Auction which featured pieces from the Wolf-Fenton china collection (generously donated by Frank Wheaton), a hand constructed Nativity made from Holly wood, beautiful jewelry, Holly apparel, and of course, plants! Thank you to all who participated.

If you're thinking of a unique gift for that special gardener or plant person in your life, consider a gift membership to the Holly Society of America – information can be found at hollysocam.org

For the first time, we are also offering a single subscription to our digital newsletter, *The Berry Bulletin* for only \$20.00 per year. Membership is not required to subscribe to the newsletter alone, and the newsletter subscription does not include membership. We have had much positive feedback on the informative nature and content of *The Berry Bulletin*. Subscriptions can also be purchased online at hollysocam.org – such an easy gift to give!

Wishing everyone a harmonious holiday season

Sue Hunter
President, HSA



Sue Hunter

Ilex verticillata and *Camellia sasanqua*, London Town Gardens



Sue Hunter

Sprig Contest



Sue Hunter

London Town Gardens

Can a Holly be Self-Fruitful?

By Jim Resch

We've gotten used to telling gardeners that they really need to plant an appropriate male holly if they want their female holly to have "berries". And yet, we see lots of claims in catalogs and on websites about certain female hollies being "self-pollinating/pollenizing", "self-fruitful", or even "self-fertile". Can this really be true?

I would always begin by saying, "color me skeptical." It only takes a microscopic amount of pollen, carried by the tiniest of insects or even by the wind, to effect fertilization of a female holly flower, so when a standalone female holly produces a few fruit, I'm never really surprised. Admittedly, there are a few examples of hollies producing "perfect" flowers bearing both functional pistils and pollen-producing stamens, allowing for true self-pollinating, but these are by no means common. With plenty of male hollies in my own landscape, I have never needed to worry about the availability of pollen. Except in the dead of winter, it seems that at least one of those males is blooming, at least enough to provide a little pollen for my females, and the insects are very good at finding it.

So it was that I was set up for my comeuppance by a female hybrid holly named Cardinal™ (the tradename for *Ilex* x 'Conal'). Cardinal™ is one of the Red Hollies, discovered as an openly-pollinated seedling of the popular 'Mary Nell', and valued for its rapid growth rate and heavy fruiting. I obtained my Cardinal™ in December 2021 in a nice large 3-gallon container, when it was already too late for planting. I decided to overwinter it in my cold greenhouse, expecting to plant it out in the spring. As the sun angle increased in late March and the greenhouse warmed, the flower buds on this female burst open prematurely. I was dismayed, as there was not a single male holly in the greenhouse, and nothing in the landscape was even remotely close to blooming. I looked carefully at the flowers on my Cardinal™. They were all female, with nothing unusual, and none appeared to have any trace of pollen on their rudimentary anthers. I figured all those flowers would be wasted.

And yet, it set fruit! Not just a few, but seemingly every female flower produced a green "berry", leading to entire stems being covered by developing fruit. And even more remarkably, these were retained all through the summer, and are coloring up nicely as we move through the cooling autumn season.

So my Cardinal™ was indeed self-fruitful. You can color me humbled.



Jim Resch



Jim Resch

Photos: Cardinal™ female flowers in greenhouse in early April, and fruit ripening in November

Holly Magic

By Sue Hunter

Sue Hunter

Now as the winter solstice is upon us and plants are tucked away, gardens left for overwintering birds, animals, and insects, most trees have shed their leaves, the evergreen hollies are majestic in color and stature. It is easy to see why people have continued their centuries old love affair with this beautiful Genus.

Do you remember the first song you ever learned as a child? I do. Mine was 'Haul out the Holly'. I played the role of the 'Holly Girl' in our elementary school Christmas play and had to memorize and sing each verse while waving branches of holly on stage with the other kids. When I learned to read, the first room I would head to when I visited my grandparents in Bridgeton, New Jersey, was the hallway. Lined with book shelves from floor to ceiling, I would quickly choose from the many books about trees and birds to read about the tree that would become my lifelong passion and career.

How many songs can we think of that mention holly? I can think of twenty six right now and there are probably more. Some were written over three hundred years ago in the most reverent fashion. And recently, a song written and performed by mega star Taylor Swift mentions "sweet dreams of holly and ribbon".

So what is it about Holly? Is there really any explanation for why people would be so infatuated with a species that has some of the sharpest leaf spines that could literally cause one to almost bleed to death?



Colonial Williamsburg, VA

The following are my own thoughts after living compatibly with Hollies for a lifetime:

The evergreen Holly is the rebel in the family. Long after everyone else in the woods has turned in for the winter, she seems to relish the shorter day length, becoming brighter and more beautiful as the temperature dips lower. Frosty mornings only accentuate the curvature of her leaves and turn her fruit into dazzling beaded jewelry draped among her branches. Undeterred during a winter storm, she remains vigilant until the ice and snow gradually begin to thaw and release their hold. Hungry deer passing by? I'll just regrow next year. And while the others are still sleeping, I'm already making plans for springtime. And just like that when everyone's attention is turned toward the vernal flowering deciduous trees, Holly decides it's time to shed her old

regalia and focus on the reemergence of the past year's attire, as flower buds swell just in time for anticipative pollinators. What? The summer solstice has come and gone already? Time for a rest during the heat of the day, but by the bright light of the moon she will continue to get taller. No rain for

a while? Holly doesn't miss a beat and no wonder, she is strong, resilient and unflappable. Yes, I know about the story of the Holly King and the Oak King. About their ageless struggle reflecting the intervals of the natural world. But it's the female who bears the fruit.

I love Holly. Okay?! And would there be a Holly Sprig Show at the National Meeting without berries?

Or maybe it's because there is a part of our ancestry that calls us to Holly.....perhaps a 14 x great-grandfather or grandmother who so appreciated the tenacious evergreen Hollies that grew everywhere on almost every continent. Who sat and pondered and observed and studied this wayward plant that didn't follow the same habits as the others. Pagans who attributed magical properties to Holly and commemorated life events, using the leaves, berries and wood in rituals.

Not only do I want to believe Holly's attributes and lore, I do believe it, to which I see no harm in doing so and will unabashedly admit to.

Is it really up to us to have an explanation for everything including that which cannot be seen?

Holly has a place in every ancient culture. It has been used by the Romans who wore crowns made of Holly into battle for protection and the Chinese and Japanese who adorned their sacred temples with branches to the Druids who brought boughs into their homes to encourage peaceful interaction with the fae folk. The English believed Holly would protect from witchcraft and evil spirits. The spines on Holly leaves are said to prevent against lightning strikes by acting as 'mini-conductors'. Native cultures in the Americas drank a tea made from the leaves and berries during cleansing purification ceremonies and later traded preserved berries as currency with the colonists who also brought many of their holly traditions with them.

I truly believe that Holly is the most sought after plant for decoration and adornment. From the past to the present it has decorated china, silver, pottery, jewelry, clothing, bedding, kitchen accessories, furniture, woodcrafts, paintings, and prints. Can you think of other things?

Holly isn't just for Christmas. Holly is for year round all time. Musings from a real-life Holly grower and farmer. It's my crop of choice.

A harmonious holiday to all





Sue Hunter

Colonial Williamsburg, VA



Ilex opaca 'Miss Helen'
during ice storm

Sue Hunter



Winter Holly Orchard

Sue Hunter



Happy Holly Days at Delaware Botanic Gardens

By Jim Resch

On November 10, 2022, the Delaware Botanic Gardens held its first-ever Happy Holly Days event, featuring speakers, guided tours, and a wreath-making workshop to celebrate Delaware's state tree and the Gardens' holly collection. I was invited to speak on behalf of the Holly Society, and enjoyed perfect weather for the event. Enthusiastic local gardeners were joined by garden staff and volunteers, all eager to learn more about hollies.

The Delaware Botanic Gardens is one of the nation's newest public gardens, having just opened to the public in September 2019. It is located on 37 acres in southern Delaware along the banks of Pepper Creek, a tidal watershed. Of special interest to the Holly Society, the Gardens were the recipient of over thirty hollies from the collection of Charles Anderson, our former President and life-long holly lover. These hollies were moved to the Gardens in the months before its opening, and have formed their first plant collection.

Our day began with a greeting by Stephen Pryce Lea, the Director of Horticulture. He spoke of the importance of holly in cultures around the world, beginning in his native England and extending to the New World. Delaware itself was once the center of the holly wreath industry, leading to the selection of the American holly as the official State Tree in 1939. Stephen then introduced Ray Sander, the President of the Board of Directors, who told of the day he met Charles Anderson and learned that he wished to donate his collection to the planned gardens. He recounted the monumental challenges in raising the funds for professional digging and transport of the trees, and their elation when the plants finally arrived in March 2019. He expressed his deep gratitude to the Anderson family for their perseverance and

generosity in ensuring that Charles's wishes would be fulfilled.

Finally, I was asked to speak about some of Charles's "signature" holly introductions, and how he came to discover so many superior hollies. I explained that we worked with the Holly Society to officially register a number of these after his passing, and to ensure that as many of these as possible were propagated for future distribution. Several of Charles's plants, which could not be moved to the Delaware Botanic Gardens because of their size, have been propagated by Bill Kuhl at McLean Nurseries in Parkville, Maryland. As a gift from Bill, I delivered several of these to the Gardens, 'Charlie's China Doll', 'Charlie's China Dean', and 'Hugger', along with a few plants from my own collection.

We ended with a walking tour through the Anderson Holly Collection, remarking that many of these specimens have adjusted well to their new life in Delaware, thanks to the care they had received from volunteers and staff at the Gardens. And, as the rest of the group began their wreath-making workshop, we were treated to a golf cart tour of the woodland portion of the Gardens, courtesy of Brent Baker, the Secretary of the Board. Here we saw a magnificent understory of American hollies on the land leading down to Pepper Creek, along with a lush growth of native ferns. Especially entertaining, however, were the giant woodland sculptures of woodland creatures, and even a giant bird's nest classroom for visiting schoolchildren, which had been newly created along the trails.

As an added bonus at the end of our visit, we learned the Delaware Botanic Gardens had just become the Holly Society's newest Institutional Member!



Stephen Pryce Lea

Giant Bird's Nest outdoor classroom.



Stephen Pryce Lea



Jim Resch

Delaware Botanic Garden's oldest holly.

Ilex opaca 'Millville'

The Shirley Solt Memorial Tree was planted in front of the Holly City Family Center in 2001 in Millville, NJ. It is *Ilex opaca* 'Millville'. A photo of it is shown on page 36 of *Holly Society Journal* Vol 19, Number 4, 2001.

Shirley Solt passed away July 20, 2001

Ron Solt passed away May 7, 2020

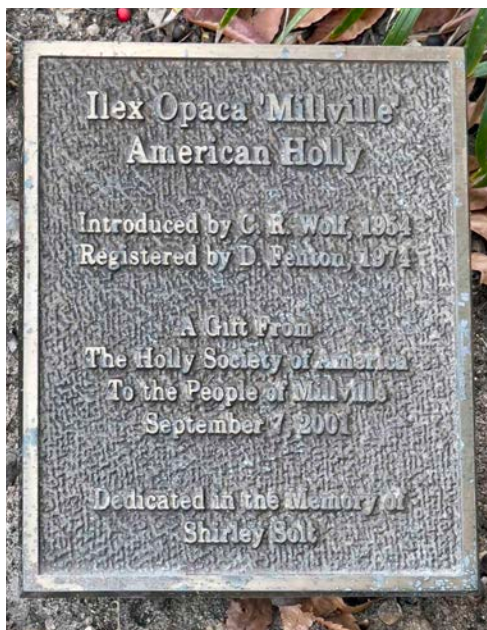
Betty Kassab passed away April 14, 2006

We miss them very much.

- Myo Myint



Ron Solt



Rachel Cobb



Rachel Cobb

October 25-28, 2022 ANNAPOLIS, Maryland

Celebrating Our 75th Anniversary!

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

HOLLY SPRIG CONTEST 2022

The full list of winners will appear in the next *Journal*. It was a very impressive show. Thank you to all who entered.

Best in Show – Amateur
Class I *Ilex opaca* Female American Holly:
‘Miss Helen’ Jim Resch

Best in Show – Professional
The Steward H. McLean Memorial Award for the Professional Division Best of Show:
‘Maryland Beauty’ Sue Hunter

The Wilson Mott Memorial Award for the Best Evergreen Sprig in the Show:
‘Scepter’ Ray Head



Ilex opaca ‘Miss Helen’
Best in Show
Amateur Division
Jim Resch

Jim Resch



Ilex verticillata ‘Maryland Beauty’
Best in Show Deciduous Professional Division
Sue Hunter

Jim Resch



Ilex x Scepter
Best in Show Professional
Evergreen Sprig
Ray Head

Jim Resch



Rachel Cobb

Holly Sprig Contest 2022 Judges: Joe Corio, Sue Hunter, Bob Shumate, April Sanborn.



Rachel Cobb

The Wolf-Fenton antiques collection of Holly pieces that has been acquired from Frank Wheaton, took up a large portion of the room. There was something for everyone. A special thank you to Janet Shriver, Grace Dorsey, and Sue Hunter for all the work that went into this display and sale. In addition to the antiques, Joe Corio made a manger scene from Holly wood, and Janet Shriver brought handmade jewelry, just to name a few items. If you did not attend you really missed out on an outstanding silent auction.



Rachel Cobb



Rachel Cobb



Rachel Cobb



Rachel Cobb

The plant auction also returned for those special and hard to find plants! It was a lively auction. Special thank you to Jim Resch (left) for being the primary auctioneer. Paul Lightfoot, took his turn as auctioneer as well.

Carole Coosaboon, Dennis Superczynski, and Emily Jernigan did a great job keep track of all the auction sales.



Sue Hunter



Sue Hunter

Rachel Cobb



Rachel Cobb

London Town Gardens

Rachel Cobb



Dan Fenton, Jr. and HSA President, Sue Hunter, cutting the anniversary cake after the banquet dinner.

Rachel Cobb



Gail Robinson checking out the colonial period fashions at London Town Gardens.

Rachel Cobb



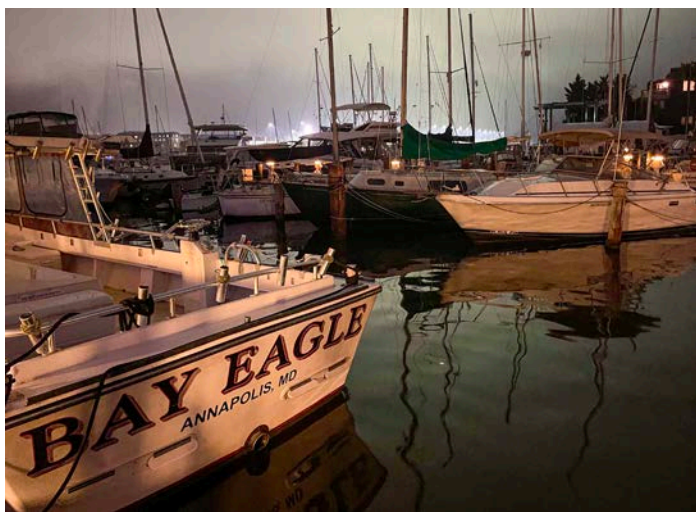
HSA President, Sue Hunter, presented the well-deserved Wolf-Fenton Award to Albert (Bert) Hendley.

Sue Hunter



Carole Cossaboon watching over the arrival table.

Rachel Cobb





Sue Hunter
Sue Hunter



City Docks, Annapolis.

Mural in Eastport section of Annapolis.

President's Awards

**Meeting Speaker
Presentations on
YouTube
CLICK TO VIEW**



Julie Hilt



Tom Hilt



Frank Shriver



Janet Shriver



Jim Resch receiving a Lifetime Member Pin from HSA President, Sue Hunter.



Carole Cossaboon



Dennis Superczynski

**SAVE THE DATE
Next Annual Meeting
Staten Island, NY
October 25-27, 2023**

From the Archives



PROCEEDINGS OF FIRST MEETING
HOLLY SOCIETY OF AMERICA
April 18, 1947

MORNING SESSION

The meeting was called to order at 10:40 A. M. by Harry W. Dengler, Chairman pro-tem who explained that the group was assembled to consider the formation of a permanent organization, preferably on a national scale, select officers and discuss other pertinent business.

Mr. Dengler acting as a committee of one recommended the group nominate the following persons for office:

President - C. R. Wolf, Millville, New Jersey
Secretary-Treasurer - Mr. & Mrs. Charles A. Young, Jr., Baltimore, Md.

The subject of selecting Vice-Presidents on a State basis was discussed but no action taken to define the organization's policy on the subject.

Mr. Harry W. Dengler was nominated as Vice-President.

Further nomination and election of officers was tabled until the afternoon session.

A discussion of the services and objectives of the society produced the following recommendations from members present:

1. That members be provided with listings of reliable dealers in Holly and its varieties.
2. That a committee be designated to pass on the merits of new varieties of Holly.
3. That action be initiated before the Governor of Maryland to enforce the Forest Conservancy District Act as it applies to holly and forest plants.

Dr. Ritter, Wild Flower Preservation Society, outlined his findings in connection with a survey of the conservation laws of 35 States.

The meeting recessed at 11:50 A. M. until 1:30 P. M.

AFTERNOON SESSION - 1:30

Presiding - Charles A. Young, Jr., Park Forester, City of Baltimore, Md.
Greetings - R. Brooke Maxwell, Director of Parks, City of Baltimore, Md.
The Holly Society: Its aims, Objectives, and Accomplishments - Harry William Dengler, Extension Forester, Extension Service, University of Maryland.

PROCEEDINGS OF FIRST MEETING

Hardy Hollies Worth Having - Gustav Malmberg, Gardener, Masonic Homes Arboretum, Elizabethtown, Pa.
The Propagation of Hollies from Cuttings - Louis S. Houghton, Horticulturist Soil Conservation Service
Plant Breeding as a Hobby - Dr. Ernst J. Schreiner, Forester, United States Forest Service

In view of the extended discussion following each speakers remarks the business tabled at the morning session was not re-opened and the meeting was adjourned following the conclusion of the program.

Charles A. Young, Jr.
Secretary Pro-tem

The minutes from the first meeting.
April 18, 1947

Growing for 75 Years
1947-2022



Holly Society of America Spring Meeting - March 30 - 31, 1950
University of Maryland, College Park, MD

Planting a Holly Tree

Millville Public Schools, Millville, NJ

Submitted by Dan Fenton, Jr.

In October, Lakeside Middle School had three special visitors return: Millville High School Seniors Adria Cotler and Christian Adams... and a holly tree! Adria began caring for the tree at home after she discovered it as a sapling during Gardening Club at Lakeside Middle School when she was a student there. Now several years later, Adria decided to return the tree home to the Lakeside Middle School campus. Thank you to these Millville High School Bolts!



Noteworthy Holly



Ray Head

This is *Ilex longipes* from Lawler property in Wilcox County, AL. Zone 7b, 8a. Best *longipes* for fruit size. It grows in sandy soil in that region. I grafted it on a male *longipes* from South Carolina and it does very well. – Ray Head

Sue Hunter



Monarch butterfly on *Ilex opaca*



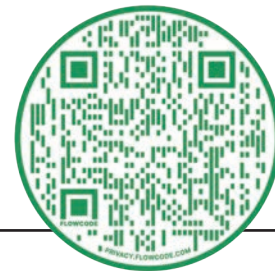
Join the Holly Society of America

Membership is open to all interested individuals. Membership in the Holly Society of America is a great way to meet other gardening and horticultural enthusiasts. The purpose of the Holly Society of America, Inc., is to stimulate interest, promote research, and collect and disseminate information about the genus *Ilex*. You will enjoy two *Journals* each year and access to the Members Only web pages. Commercial/Institutional Memberships have additional benefits.

Join or Renew Now!

hollysocam.org/membership.htm

The Holly Society of America, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.





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Facebook: Holly Society of America
facebook.com/HollySocietyofAmericaInc/

Facebook: Hollies for Gardening and Decorating
facebook.com/holliesforgardening/



How you can support The Holly Society of America

Joining the HSA is a great way to support our not-for-profit organization. Another way you may support society with financial donation.

Donations to The Holly Society of America are used in a number of ways to further the goals of the society including funding for scientific research, support of our publications including the *Holly Journal*, public outreach in the promotion of the genus *Ilex*, and much more.

The contribution may be given in honor of or in memory of a special person in your life. This is a way for you to not only help HSA but to also show your respect for or remembrance of someone who has been special in your life. A notification will advise that a donation has been made to HSA in honor or memory of that special person.

**To make a tax-deductible donation visit our website at
hollysocam.org/donate.htm or mail your check to
Holly Society of America, Inc.
P.O. Box 803, Millville, NJ 08332-0803**



Sue Hunter

Winter solstice wreath with blue holly.

Cranberry Almond Biscotti

Member Karen Vallowe uses this recipe for her Holiday Biscotti.
allrecipes.com/recipe/10159/cranberry-almond-biscotti/
Let us know if you try it and how it turned out. Thank you Karen.

Ingredients

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 egg whites
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup sliced almonds
- 1 cup sweetened-dried cranberries

Directions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F (170 degrees C).

Combine dry ingredients in a medium sized mixing bowl. Whisk together eggs, egg whites, and vanilla or almond extract in a separate mixing bowl.

Add egg mixture to dry ingredients, mixing just until moist, using an electric mixer on medium speed. Add dried cranberries and almonds; mix thoroughly.

On floured surface, divide batter in half and pat each half into a log approximately 14 inches long and 1 1/2 inches thick. Place on a cookie sheet and bake 30 minutes or until firm. Cool on a wire rack about 10 minutes, or until cool enough to handle.

Cut biscotti on the diagonal into 1/2-inch slices. Reduce oven temperature to 300 degrees F (150 degrees C). Place cut biscotti upright on a cookie sheet, spacing them about an inch apart, and bake for an additional 20 minutes. Let cool and store in a loosely covered container.



Karen Vallowe

*Happy Holly-days
&
Happy New Year!*



October 25-28, 2022
ANNAPOLIS, Maryland

Celebrating Our 75th Anniversary!

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS BONUS

Thank you, Emily Jernigan and Janet Shriver for sharing their photos with us!

Growing for 75 Years
1947-2022

