

Branching Out: Getting to know your fellow club members

Marilyn Lustig

Co-Founder in 1998

What kind of gardening do you do? Or prefer?



After years of developing my garden, adding new beds & new plants, I'm enjoying the fruits of my labor as I deal with joint replacements. I'm doing my best to maintain at this point.

When did you start gardening? What drew you to it?

When we purchased our house in Natick, it had a 2-level back yard perfect for a rock garden but I didn't know a perennial from an annual. Then I met Anne Freeman & she would visit with a division, look around, & tell me to plant it "there." From "there", I started learning & developing an interest.

What would you like to tell the club about yourself: other passion(s); work (current/former/volunteer); family; gardening credentials; etc.?

I've been a life-long reader & worked at Wellesley Books for 20 years. I've always loved theater, food, art, & of course games. I've been married for 48 years, have 2 lovely daughters & I'm delighted to have my granddaughter Violet.

How did you become involved with the Natick Garden Club?

I wanted to learn more about gardening & joined the Framingham garden club. I asked Anne to join with me & she said only if it were in Natick. So, with a year of the Framingham club as a template, we started the Evening Natick Garden Club.



What is most important to you about NGC membership?

I cannot imagine my life without the friendships & activities of the club. I hoped that it would become a sustaining club & we have arrived. This spring confirms this as to the enthusiasm & fortitude in going forward with Zoom & the online plant sale. WOW!

What would you like to see the club do that it isn't doing now?

It is most important to bring in & welcome new members of all ages with their strengths & enthusiasm, as it is critical to the longevity of the club. I think we're doing a good job of it!

Marilyn sent along this historical photo. See how many members your can identify.



Earlina Jamison

Member since 2019

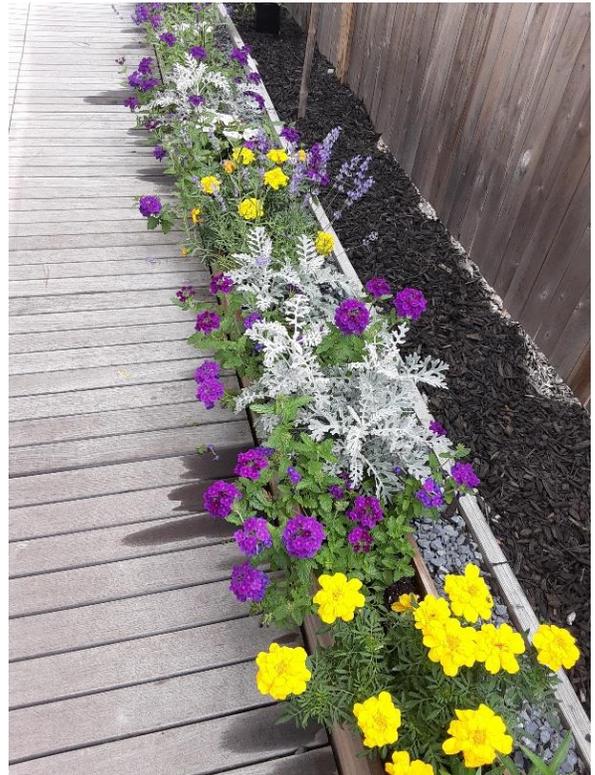


What kind of gardening do you do? Or prefer?

I prefer cottage style gardening. I love a garden that is filled with colors and flowers that bloom all during the summer. Several years ago, I started container planting when my husband added a flower box that extended the length of the patio. Every year I fill it with annuals: impatiens, marigolds, verbenas, and dusty millers. This allows me to enjoy colorful flowers even on our patio.

When did you start gardening? What drew you to it?

When my husband and I bought our first house in Natick in 2000 it came with a large back yard and a front yard with very little curb appeal. The first couple of years were spent updating the inside of our home and finally it was time to do something with the outside. Since this was my first house, I knew that if I wanted to have a successful garden, I needed to do a lot of reading. I bought numerous books, magazines, and videos on gardening. It soon became a passion for me. I love being outside among nature and having a garden that I can enjoy brings me great pleasure. When we moved and purchased our next home, I started with an empty slab of lawn and created the garden that I have now. It is now my oasis after a long day of work.



What would you like to tell the club about yourself: other passion(s); work (current/former/volunteer); family; gardening credentials; etc.?

I presently work for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society as an Operations Administrator. In my spare time, I love reading. My favorite books are variations of Jane Austen's novel, Pride and Prejudice (and, of course, gardening books as well). I also love making greeting cards to send to family and friends.

How did you become involved with the Natick Garden Club?

One year my neighbor invited me to go with her to the annual auction at the Senior Center. I loved it so much that I came to one of the club's open meeting. When I found out all the volunteer work you performed to beautify the downtown, I made the decision to join

What is most important to you about NGC membership?

That this is a club that gives back to the community.

What would you like to see the club do that it isn't doing now?

Find ways to get the younger generation involved in the club.



Jean Egerhei

Member since 2018

What kind of gardening do you do? Or prefer?

Well, my roots (a little pun there) lie in vegetable gardening. Where most people will give a bouquet of flowers from their garden, I try to give away baskets of lettuce, tomatoes or zucchini to family, friends and neighbors when they start to come in abundance. However, most of my garden beds contain perennials with a few annuals here and there. Lately with five grandkids underfoot it tends to be a garden of weeding. My perennial weeds are drought resistant, self-pollinating, insect resistant and can tolerate sun, shade and even cement environments.



When did you start gardening? What drew you to it?

I don't ever remember not gardening. Since my parents grew up during the depression, vegetable gardening was a way of life for them. My siblings and I worked right alongside my mom; planting, weeding, watering and harvesting. We would grow, preserve and store vegetable for use during the winter. I never saw my mother as happy as when she was able to buy a freezer and could freeze her produce instead of can it. Oddly enough, I still have all the old canning jars and when I get an abundance of tomatoes from my garden I still can tomatoes, put up jars of pickles and preserve raspberry jam.



When my husband and I were able to buy our own house on Cottage St in Natick, I became interested in developing herb and medicinal gardens very much like those found at the Shaker villages in and around NE. Later when we moved to South Natick we had over an acre to clear, build a saltbox house and develop perennial beds around the property. As you know there is no end to gardening and my garden is still a work in progress even after 38 years.

What would you like to tell the club about yourself: other passion(s); work (current/former/volunteer); family; gardening credentials; etc.?

Although I have been retired now for four years, I miss those days when I taught elementary school children for 42 years. I was lucky enough to have taught in 3 different school systems; some years working with children with special needs and some years teaching in a regular 4th grade classroom. Fortunately, I was able to teach at Lilja School in Natick, my favorite school by far, for more than 30 years.

I am the mother of two grown daughters and grandmother to 5 active grandchildren, 3 girls and 2 boys. Since my husband passed away 3 years ago, I have become, with the help of my son-in-law Jim, a true homesteader; learning how to become self-sufficient by taking care of all home maintenance projects, garden beds, vegetable gardens and grandchildren at "Camp Nuna."

Whenever I have a free moment, I love to sew tote bags, curtains, and children's clothing, and read, read, read.

How did you become involved with the Natick Garden Club?

Although I had heard many good things about the Natick Garden Club from Elizabeth Carroll and Joanne Rampe when I taught at Lilja, it wasn't until I retired that I received an application from my neighbor and friend, Pat Polimeno. When Pat says you have to join, you join. And I'm so glad I did.

What is most important to you about NGC membership?

To me, the most important aspect of the NGC membership is fellowship. I so enjoy being with other people who have a shared interest in gardening. I love going on the field trips and to the monthly meetings and listening to all of the interesting programs; then trying to implement them into my own gardening craft. When I first joined, I felt so included and welcomed into the club. Our members are so loving, warm and caring and they are so willing to share their success stories as well as their disasters. But more importantly they care about the needs and well-being of all the members of the group as well as our community.

What would you like to see the club do that it isn't doing now?



That is a tough question. The NGC does so much already. I was inspired when Elizabeth Carroll sent out a request for members to donate flowers to create bouquets for the fire fighters who put out that terrible fire in downtown Natick last year. I'm thinking that if we have members who grow vegetables and have extra, we could ask for donations for the Natick food pantry. We could do that with cut flowers as well. We could also send bouquets to the hospitals as a thank you for their hard work during the pandemic.