

## Plant Sale & Garden Visit, Saturday May 10 2014

While I was sorting through another ‘pile’ (I seem to have developed a great talent for creating), I was filing away another chapter membership list and thinking how our chapter membership has evolved these past 25 years. Scanning down the page I locked onto a name and thought, “Heavens to Murgatroyd,” I’ll bet most of our membership have never even heard of this guy – let alone met him – we still needed a garden for the Spring Sale and we haven’t been there in, oh gosh years. And so the phone calls started. Yes, my friends, I don’t email, I don’t own a computer or even a smart phone – much to the hair pulling by Don and Tony. None the less after a number of tries I am happy to announce that after at least 20 year absence since our last visit, our 2014 Spring Plant Sale and Garden visit will be hosted by the patriarch of our chapter, Mr. Harry Elkins.

Chances are you have only seen his name on our membership list or you may have overheard snippets of one of the tales of his exploits. Harry has put in the odd appearances at one event or another over the years. But if you missed it here’s your chance to meet the man himself. Harry lives and gardens in Grosse Point, Michigan, or as we provincials refer to it “The banana belt of Michigan.”

Those of you who have had your horticultural creativities hobbled by a less than generous plot of ground – prepare to have your gardening sensibilities challenged. And join us in a botanical labyrinth created by a plantsman who has wielded his garden trowel like a well-used shoe horn. Be warned! This is not a garden for those who don’t have their claustrophobia well in check. No pets. Leave young children with a sitter. Don’t even think about a stroller! This is the guy who coined the phrase “Always room for another plant.”

As I said my memory of our first visit to Harry & Irene’s garden is over two decades distant [Sadly Irene is no longer with us]. It was one of Andrea’s and my first garden visits after joining the Chapter. As we “toured” the garden I remember thinking “deer could not get through here”. But it was as beautiful as an early spring day in May – as could be hoped for. We laughingly eeled our way along ribbon thin paths in a conga line. Performing a sideways wiggle-walk through a bamboo-like grove of *Magnolia*, Dogwoods, *Stewartia* treelings, *Sorbus*, *Cryptomeria*, *Cedrus*, and possibly *Cercis* – I have no idea what all we passed.

And all through our weaving our eyes were overwhelmed by an eruption of color at our feet from a truly floral tapestry of American & European woodlanders and bulbs, crowding up at as from every crevice of soil. Now, as all gardens do, I suppose it has changed. No matter, gather up plants for the sale, grab your wallet and lunch too and join your fellow Great Lakes Chapter members for a memorable visit and celebrate a real gardening legend and his garden – our own Harry Elkins.



Two views of Harry Elkins’ yard in May

## Plant Sale Preparations:

Keep in mind these few simple rules for the plant sale. Please try to pot or repot plants at least ten days before the sale. Otherwise, the plants may look ragged. Please also select appropriate plants for the sale. Interesting and unusual alpiners, woodland plants, and small woody plants are ideal. No large, common woody plants, annuals, common perennials, and tropicals, please. Before you bring the plants, label each pot, with the name of the plant [scientific name, if known, and cultivar or variety, if known].

We will have price labels for your plants at the Sale. Be sure to price your plants as soon as you set them out on the tables, before you lose yourselves to the garden. If you choose to pre-price your plants at home, be sure **NOT** to put the price on your plants name label as price labels are pulled for tallying. It's nice to include a few notes, i.e., sun or part shade, well-drained or humusy soil to help out our beginning members – and remember your name on the reverse side of your plant name label in case the purchaser has questions later on.

After your plants are staged and priced come and find me (Jacques) for your First Pick labels. Donors receive one First Pick for each 10 plants they bring. Also find Tony or Don to have them consider an item for the Plant Auction. An additional First Pick label is awarded for each item selected for Auction.

**SATURDAY 10 May 2014**

**11 AM - ca. 3 PM**

**GARDEN TOUR &  
PLANT SALE**

**HARRY ELKINS**

916 Westchester Rd,

Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230

(313) 821-2185

Follow I-94 E to Exit 223 Cadieux Road S (Right) in Detroit. Follow Cadieux Road 2.7 mi to E Jefferson Avenue. Turn right onto E Jefferson Avenue and go 1.0 mi to Westchester Road in Grosse Pointe Park. Turn left onto Westchester Road and 0.2 mi down will be Harry's on the left.

**MAPS NOT TO SCALE**

