

A YEAR OF BLOOMS IN THE KENMORE GARDEN

January

Edgeworthia with its paper-white flowers and wonderful scent starts the Garden year. I planted it along the deck so neighbors walking by could enjoy it. Fall planted pansies are the only other source of color, except the green boxwoods and red berries of holly and purple berries of mahonia. Our Christmas Camellia might still be blooming.

February

Lenten Roses appear. Sasanquas planted by Mrs. Bailey in the back yard bloom on those weird warm days. Late in the month, green sprouts appear on several plants. Crocus come out. The daphne twins along the front steps start to blossom and shares their glorious scent that passers-by can also enjoy.

March

Forsythia appears with its pale yellow and tiny blooms. White Snowdrops quickly sprout and bloom. Daffodils begin to sprout. Our garden has a variety of them. Yellow ones in the corner pocket garden; pink ones under the cherry tree; orange ones in the orange bed in the Back Forty.

Hyacinths in the Kenmore bed sprout their mauve magic. Phlox shows its tiny blooms. Late March or Early April is Cherry Blossom Time. I visit the ABC store for my Cherry Tree Martini ingredients!

April

Tulips planted in the the fall now bloom. I love the Rembrandt multi-color and the peony looking ones! Daffodils still shine. Dogwoods appear.

Our purple Siberian irises on Kenmore show their tower of flowers. I have placed them throughout the Kenmore bed. The *Golden Zebra Iris* that I planted in the yellow pocket garden in Fall, 2020 bloomed the following April.

The Japanese irises along the creek and under the sundial also begin to bloom in purples and yellows.

Azaleas burst forth. Ms. Bailey's large established ones are first; Lavender *Formosa* in the back and front yard. White *Mrs. GG Gerbing* along the stream in the Japanese garden. Along our border with our back door neighbor, white *George Tabor* and the rare *Plumtree* azalea with its orange/pink blossoms. I planted another *George Tabor* under the cherry tree.

Encore azaleas are next in the month, depending upon their location in the garden. Along the Lochmore sidewalk, *Autumn Sangria* peeks over the wall with its 5' blooms. Next to it, is *Autumn Empress* with its 3" blooms. We planted Autumn Royalty under the tulip poplar in 2018 and it has taken 3-4 years to get established and is now blooming every spring. Next to The Grotto, *Autumn Amethyst*, which was planted in 2019, has gracefully spread around the rock that Carol & Joe put there. Its spread of lavender blooms is graceful and magical.

In the Spring, 2021, I planted *Autumn Carnation* along the fence in the Japanese garden and next to the peony along the walk to the back walk to the kitchen door. In 2023, I planted other *Autumn Carnation* Under the cherry tree. Their blossoms start as the cherry blossoms fade.

The deciduous azaleas are slower to bloom. The yellow azaleas I planted in 2019, which are a cross of rhododendron and azalea, are blooming for the first time. One is at the edge of the circle bed, *Admiral Semmes* is next to the bluebird house. Azalea cocktails *a la* The Masters MAY be served sometime this month!

Peonies begin to bud. I have planted enough so that there is a succession of blooms, since most Peony blooms only last ten days. I have two in the Lochmore bed and others among the boxwoods that are along the front walk. The yellow tree peony in the yellow bed under the telephone pole is always special.

Our special Korean Lilac, *Miss Kim*, is still more purple in the garden, but it also has a magic scent; again, I planted it along the sidewalk for passers-by to enjoy.

Japanese maples are leafing out, including "Henry" our gift from the yard of neighbors Tom Darden and Nicole Cota, which is *Crimson Queen*. The other Japanese maples are: Coral Bark in the Zen room; *Lionshead* or *tamukeyama* Japanese-maple; *Bloodgood* which we planted next to the deck on Lochmore, sends out its burgundy leaves; it also gave us two seedlings that were transplanted in the back forty.

April also allows our Bald Cypress to re-appear in its tiny eco-system along the creek. Its feathery green leaves appear from the leafless limbs. Since our former neighbor cut both of them down, its renewed growth is an allegory of Justice against indifference.

May

Our Tree peonies continue to show a special kind of magic. In China, some tree peonies are hundreds of years old.

The Veronica on Kenmore is more purple in the garden palette. It was a gift to Carol from Raleigh Fine Arts in honor of her year as President.

Finally, roses begin to bloom. We have about 30 roses in the yard in whatever sunny spots I can find. The Lochmore bed was first: St. Patrick's (yellow), Betty Boop (gold & red), Shockwave (yellow), Pink Peace which died and was replaced by Heritage; I later added Rhapsody in Blue (which is an attempt at the Holy Grail of roses, a blue rose). Iceberg roses in the Kenmore beds. David Austin roses in the back yard. Veteran's Rose in the back forty (given to me by the Social Work Board in memory of my Dad's passing).

My favorite rose is Simply Marvelous. It is a purple floribunda planted next to the steps to the deck. In my opinion, it is the most fragrant rose in the garden.

Satsuki azaleas + other azaleas will also bloom. Maple trees have fully leafed out with their special allure. Irises begin to bloom, especially Japanese Irises unfurl along the creek banks. Ferns in the Fren Garden have fully sprouted. Hosta pop up and some send out blooms.

June

Roses continue their parade. Day lilies appear and are quickly replaced. Pansies have to be removed, but are replaced by impatiens.

July

Still more roses. Calla lilies (one of Carol's favorites) pop up. Spider lilies appear with their thin arms. Crepe myrtles begin to bloom. Continued day lilies with their color varieties.

August

Still more roses & day lilies. Canna appear. Continued crepe myrtle blossoms. Will that hollyhock that I planted last fall appear?

September

Still more roses & day lilies. Encore azaleas re-visit.

October

Still more roses & day lilies. Camellias too. While the Garden is withdrawing, I go crazy and decorate the Garden with Halloween decorations – graveyards with glow-in-the-dark tombstones; 20-foot spider webs with six-foot spiders; talking pumpkins; witches of all kinds, including three animated witches who stir a cauldron and quote MacBeth; plus various animated decorations. We have hundreds of kids who visit. Carol tolerates my mid-life crisis of Halloween decorating.

November

Roses, still they persist through Thanksgiving; I won't let Witherspoon prune them until December. Time to plant tulips. Dying leaves on our hardwoods depart in bursts of orange, yellow and red.

December

Camellias, especially the Christmas and Yuletide, bloom. The rest of The Garden is beginning its winter rest.