



A GARDEN REIMAGINED

Renovations Underway in the Bradley Rosaceous Collection

Stephen Schneider, Manager of Horticulture

Spring at the Arnold Arboretum's Forest Hills gate is usually striking. The many cherries in bloom along Forest Hills Road beckon you to explore the sights and aromas of the Eleanor Cabot Bradley

Rosaceous Collection. Visitors over the past year may have noticed some very distinct changes in and around this entrance to the Arboretum. Horticultural staff undertook the first part of a three-phase suite of renovations to this important collection and popular landscape destination.

This work represents the first major change to the display of the Arboretum's extensive collection of rose-family plants, which was created in 1985 through a gift by longtime Arboretum friend Eleanor Cabot Bradley. As time passed and the garden grew into its own, it became necessary to rethink the overall management of this collection from both horticultural and curatorial perspectives. In particular, we wanted to reassess the value and placement of the plants in the garden, and thin overcrowded planting beds to better delineate and display individual accessions.

These decisions were considered in tandem with aims expressed in the Arboretum's Interpretive Master Plan to enhance the experience of Arboretum visitors. Reorganizing

the Bradley Rosaceous Collection (BRC) would give us the opportunity to improve accessibility within the garden, and create new opportunities to engage the public with these diverse and beautiful plants. Working closely with Julie Moir

Messervy Design Studio, the Arboretum approved a renovation plan to better organize the collection, improve circulation and educational opportunities for visitors, and facilitate improved plant maintenance by Arboretum staff.

The first step in realizing these goals involved a thorough plant-by-plant review of the collection by the curatorial department. Based on assessments of their cultural needs, condition, and collections value, some plants—like the Arboretum's conservation collection of *Amelanchier nantucketensis*—were shifted to other parts of the garden. Some plants stayed in place, while many others were moved to a temporary holding area in the nurseries at the Dana Greenhouses for safe-keeping during the renovation.

Landscape alterations began last spring with the removal of

a large bed surrounding the cherries along Forest Hills Road. By turfing this area, and providing space for future plantings of flowering cherry trees, we created a more scenic presentation that will eventually serve as a "Cherry Promenade." This will allow visitors to walk around and

continued



Sue Pfeiffer

Redesign work in 2009 for the Bradley Rosaceous Collection included the transformation of a large bed of flowering cherries (*Prunus*) into a "Cherry Promenade" near the Forest Hills Gate. Here, Kirsten "Kit" Ganshaw (right) and Joe Cade remove a redundant shrub from the collection.

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under these trees during their peak blooming time in April and May.

Planting bed deconstruction continued throughout the spring and summer. With the arrival of fall, the horticulture crew began the task of reshaping the beds. Approximately 5,000 double cobbles were moved multiple times in the process. Field leadership for this effort was provided by Horticultural Technologists Kirsten “Kit” Ganshaw and Matthew Connelly. Kit provides ongoing care of the BRC and kept the operation flowing in a way that, above all, paid strong attention to the



Jon Hetman

Horticultural Technologist Scott Grimshaw (*right*) and Hunnewell Intern Mark Delaney reposition two of the more than 5,000 double cobbles moved as part of the bed redesign of the Bradley Rosaceous Collection.

plants. Matt’s extensive experience with stonework—and outstanding skills with equipment operation—enabled us to stay on time and on budget while attaining beautiful results. In the spirit of “many hands making light work,” nearly everyone on the horticulture crew contributed to the completion of this phase of the project.

The next round of renovations will begin this spring with additional plant removals and relocations. Final bed reconfiguration will resume in fall, including the installation of a “Rose Roundabout” in the large open area at the north end of the garden known as “The Gathering.” Once completed, this revised area will display numerous hybrid roses, notable for their rich colors and fragrance. 

Take a tour of the Bradley Rosaceous Collection with Nancy Rose, editor of *Arnoldia*.

A Rose Family Reunion

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