

GLENSHEEN GLEANINGS

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GLENSHEEN TO CELEBRATE 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Chester A. Congdon began building Glensheen along the shore of Lake Superior in 1905. Three years later, in 1908, Chester, his wife Clara, and their six children, moved into their new home. A 39-room country estate. It included a Jacobean-style manor house, a carriage house, gardener's cottage, clay tennis courts, boathouse, and bowling green. Although Glensheen gave a palatial appearance, it was truly a family home. The house was alive with the laughter of children, music, and engaging conversations of intellectual pursuits, as well as discussions of family and business matters.

Today, 75 years later, under the auspices of its new caretaker, the University of Minnesota, visitors will be invited to share in Glensheen's rich and recent past as some of its earlier traditions are brought to life in special events signifying Glensheen's 75th year.

Recently hired to coordinate Glensheen's 75th Anniversary Events is Jeanie Brooke. Brooke is a public relations consultant, and is quite enthusiastic about the variety of events she is working on, "There won't be one big, gala event to celebrate Glensheen's 75th; rather there will be a series of events staged throughout the summer months—when Glensheen is at its best—to give Glensheen its due."

All of the events are in the planning stages, of course, but Brooke promises there will be lots of music, family-centered activities, and history-related programs. "Music will play a large part in the celebration. There will be a Concert Artist Series, and also a Band Concert Series "By the Lake." Guests will be encouraged to bring picnic lunches and enjoy Glensheen's spacious



ANN RUSSELL, Glensheen Docent in dress of 1910. Our volunteers will be encouraged to wear period clothing during the 75th Anniversary.

grounds while they enjoy the music," Brooke says.

With emphasis on family, vendors are being sought, and vocal groups are being scheduled to perform for a special Family Day Fair to be held on the grounds. "We hope to have ice-cream and popcorn vendors, jugglers and clowns, old-fashioned photos—perhaps

using one of Glensheen's carriages, barbershop quartet singing, balloons—and good weather!" quips Brooke.

"We are looking into the possibility of having a Turn-of-the-Century Fashion Show, offering also educational programs on the history of fashion, and coordinating special guest appearances that might fit into the Turn-of-the-Century theme.

"We would like to encourage Duluthians to explore their own family histories by offering programs on recording oral histories, and suggesting what questions to ask to obtain the important family history information.

"Certainly we want to recognize the University Board of Regents, the University President, and other civic organizations who have contributed to the development and growth of Glensheen as a historic and tourist site in Minnesota."

Members of an antique car club from the Twin Cities will be driving their cars to Duluth this summer. Some will drive their classic cars to Glensheen where members will tour the house and grounds. "Something that would be a lot of fun, and that we are working on, is a Billiards Tournament. We hope to coordinate preliminary matches to be played in local Duluth billiards parlors, with the final match to be played in Glensheen's Billiards Room," Brooke enthuses. "Although we are still in the planning stages, I hope it is evident that we are trying to offer a variety of activities to accommodate many interests, and always in keeping with the warmth and taste of the Congdon family." She adds, "And I am always open to suggestions to accomplish these aims."



DAYS GONE BY

Interview of Fran Karles
by Betty KeteHum



Fran Kartes will tell you Glensheen brings out the best in everyone. Now in charge of housekeeping, Fran has long had a special love for the place. Her husband was maintenance and houseman for 15 years, and it was Miss Elisabeth herself who hired him. At that time the Karteses lived in pleasant quarters in the carriage house. Fran never spent much time in the big house but she knew others on the staff and was aware of their duties. "But it really was Miss Elisabeth who was the heart of the place."

When the University took over in 1977, there was that period when it hadn't been decided how to use the property. Her husband went to work on campus and Fran was asked to do limited service. Since cleaning requires industry and common sense, Fran really learned from doing. It was a big assignment and she found it a challenge to keep up appearances.

When Glensheen became a museum it was necessary to enlarge the service. Fran stayed on and hired her own staff. Some have moved along but she now has Marianne Hanzlik, Dorothy Pearson, Steve Johnson and Andy McDonald. Cleaning is an everyday matter in this house—all day Wednesday when the mansion is closed to the public and from 8 to 12 noon on other days, including Sunday. Fran interviews all applicants—they can never be students since they have to be there by 8 a.m. She recalls the day Dorothy and Andy applied. She took them on a tour of the premises and "at first they were overwhelmed," but they stayed and learned from spring housecleaning. She says there is method to her madness—"we train you and you work out your own schedule and pace—no two work alike."

You first learn to keep the floors clean—"then you won't have dust moving up, and you just eliminate a lot of problems." So that's where the cleaners start each day. On Wednesday the heavy plastic mats on the first floor are picked up and scrubbed and the Orientals are swept with a special

vacuum that has no beater brush. The bathrooms are cleaned daily. And furniture is rubbed down—you never spray polish directly to the wood, rather onto a soft clean cloth, and by buffing the pieces daily they develop a fine gloss. "They are better now than when we started."

Brass must be polished oftener than silver. Take the silver chandeliers in the dining room, for example—they are done just twice a year. The University builds a special scaffolding, and it takes one woman all day to clean the ornate fixture over the table and in the bay. While the scaffolding is still available they rub down the wood in the main hall and get at the top of the carved surfaces. Then there's the smoking room—the beams in there must be oiled as the cypress and chestnut woods seem to dry out and splinter. "You wouldn't believe the slivers you'll pick up just dusting."

None of the delicate wall coverings such as the red damask in the living room, the champagne silk damask in the reception room, and the wool tapestry in the library, have ever been cleaned other than with a gentle lamb's wool duster. The bronze chandelier fixtures in the living room need only be washed (these too are done from the scaffolding, ladders being too insecure). The glass on framed pictures can be washed with glass spray (this is also used on windows), but the oil paintings receive only a gentle feather dusting.

And at housecleaning time the staff will complete a room at a time, doing windows, woodwork, and moving the heavy pieces and getting into all corners. Fran washes and irons the bedroom curtains. Recently they have all been refinishing floors. The master bedroom took three days, one for sanding, then sizing and finally waxing.

Fran and her staff gather in her office for coffee breaks or at the lunch hour to share and air feelings. Fran works 26 hours and the others some less. They clean and they have the sense of preserving at the same time.

Each season has its drawbacks, but winter is worst if visitors come in with cleats in their footwear. Fall can be bad with the rains and walking wet leaves into the place. That accounts for the carpeting in the laundry room and down the service hall. At first you could find gum just about anywhere—on plastic runners, but a favorite spot was the under-ledge of the center cabinet in the kitchen. Much of this has been alleviated by the docent's opening

greeting, asking visitors to abstain. Fran feels she has an efficient, polite and prideful staff "who aren't just here for the job." All have a respect for the mansion and a wish to see it preserved. Fran made it quite plain. Glensheen brings out the best in everyone—even the volunteers!

THE MASTER BEDROOM

Margie Martin

The furniture in the Master Bedroom has recently been rearranged according to the way it appeared in photographs dated 1912. Some of the pieces, such as the Cheval Mirror and the double bed, were brought down from storage on the third floor. The tall chest and dressing table were formerly in the dressing room. All of the furniture in this room was done by the Wm. French Co. The wood used in the furniture and the trim is American Walnut.

Originally, there was a stenciled border above the picture railing. The pomegranate design in the chair and pillow and the tile on the fireplace was also carried out in the stenciling.

Once again, the same geometric pattern in the fireplace tile and in the stained glass on the book case doors are the same as those throughout the house.

The Delft candle sticks on the mantel are from Holland and the Oriental pieces on the desk are original to this room.

The desk was used by Mrs. Congdon to do her correspondence. The rugs are Chenille from Europe and have been in this room from the beginning.

On the dressing table is a commissioned plaster study of Mrs. Congdon doing needlework. It was done sometime in the 1930's.

It is my feeling that the beauty of this room has been enhanced by this "new" arrangement.

Gleanings Committee

The volunteers who have assisted with this edition of Glensheen Gleanings are: Betty KeteHum, Margie Martin, Corky McLean, Ann Russell, Theresa Sanders, Mary Anne Schroeder and Jane Skalisky—We'd like to take this opportunity to thank each of them for their willingness and enthusiasm.

DOCENT COUNCIL TO PUBLISH COOKBOOK

Ann Russell

What do these exotically named dishes have in common: potted pigeon, creamed radishes with spinach ring, baked hominy and white monkey conserve? They are all recipes from the Congdon's kitchen. Darlene Krans, Thursday Day Captain and member of the Docent Council, knows this because it was her ingenious idea to compile a cookbook of the Congdon family's special recipes. Linda Vukson, JoAnne Luhtala, Jan Fournier and Mary Grover, all Docent council members, are also on the committee. They hope the book, **Recipes from the Glensheen Kitchen**, will go on sale in the gift shop this summer.

One of the most interesting and unique features of Glensheen as a museum is its continuity of contents. Many of the original household items have remained intact during its 75 years. The cookbook committee has taken advantage of this special facet to bring their project to life. They have meticulously researched the recipe files still stored in the cupboards of Glensheen's kitchen where the Congdons and their cooks originally placed them. The docents began this project in December and have worked in the Glensheen kitchen and in their homes studying recipes that have been marked as 'special', either by the cooks or members of the Congdon family.

"We have only included recipes in the cookbook that have been especially marked in some way," said Darlene. She added, "Some are serving suggestions noted by the cook, others are indications that this was an especially good recipe. Whenever possible the notation will be included along with the recipe."

It has been decided not to pretest the recipes involved. (A word of advice however, a good milk cow in your garage seems to be the major requirement for many of these early 1900 recipes). It will be a usable cookbook but because of the old-fashioned terms and equipment noted in the recipes, a glossary will be included.

The committee has also taken great care in the design of the cookbook. The 64 pages will be spiral bound with a plastic-coated cover, which can be easily wiped off. There will be eight sections including: breads, soups, entrees, vegetables, salads, des-

serts, dressings and sauces and a section on jams, jellies and conserves. Cheryl LeBeau, a docent, has done the pen and ink style artwork on the divider pages and cover. She has used designs taken from Glensheen's kitchen and serving areas.

In the search for authentic recipes, Darlene has talked with two Glensheen employes, Bob Wyness, current gardener at Glensheen who has lived on the property for 48 years, and a former upstairs maid who worked at Glensheen from 1926 to 1928. The maid's duties included arranging flowers in the main floor flower room and working as a cook on her maid's day off. She told Darlene that the Congdons were especially fond of eggplant and spinach souffles. She also noted that they had homemade ice cream every Sunday and because of that, several of the ice cream recipes will be included. Bob Wyness said that the Congdons had their own apple orchard that is still in existence today, although somewhat rundown. He also cared for an asparagus bed which was quite a rarity because of Duluth's soil. Bananas from the greenhouse were carried into the milk room in the main house and hung over pipes in the ceiling to ripen.

What are these recipes, some well over 75 years old, really like?

Here, just for our readers, is a preview!

VALENTINE PUDDING

1 cup dates
3/4 cup nuts
2 T. flour
1 cup sugar
3 eggs

Mix all ingredients and bake in an earthen dish placed in a pan of hot water for 50 minutes. This note was added to the recipe by the cook: "Serve in glasses with cream."

I tried this recipe in my own kitchen and so will add these notes also. The reasons for the name "Valentine Pudding" are evidently lost in the mists of time, but the pudding comes out of the oven with a crispy, meringue-like crust and a deliciously sweet, syrupy center.

I first buttered my stoneware baking dish (6" in diameter), then beat the eggs and sugar thoroughly before adding them to the flour, chopped nuts and dates. I preheated the oven to 350°, a moderate temperature since no temperature was given in the recipe, and baked the pudding about 15 minutes longer than stated for a total of 65 minutes.

As to the dates, a 7 year old who lives in our house and belongs to a religious fringe group that holds, "all brown bits in food are chocolate or they are yukky," made a comment that would bring Valentine's Day to the heart of any mother, even Clara Congdon, "Tastes good, Mom!"



LINDA VUKSON, JAN FOURNIER, DARLENE KRANS and JOANNE LUHTALA sorting through recipes for the Glensheen Cookbook.

Directors Corner

Several changes have been made in the main house. The billiard table has been recovered, courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Michael George. Most of the furniture has been removed from the Recreation Room to provide a larger meeting/conference area. The changes in the Master Bedroom appears elsewhere in this issue. Outside, the terrace/subway area is being renovated by Hicks Construction under the supervision of Bill Moser of Architectural Resources, Inc. The end product will be a new waterproof barrier to protect the restored subway area.

This summer, daily tours will be scheduled from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. beginning May 21st. The Discover Duluth Tours will be coming in as in previous years; however, this year they will not interfere with public tour hours.

These are some of the current happenings at Glensheen. I have highlighted these as they are most visible, other changes occurring are more subtle.

NAME TAGS

We are in the process of ordering permanent name tags for the volunteers as a means of identification. They are tan plastic with a Tudor Rose, our sign of excellence, in the upper left corner and Glensheen across the top—with the volunteer's name imprinted below. Sam Plourd, our Curator of Collections, is to be credited with the artwork.

A new volunteer who has com-

pleted the four training sessions and given 20 hours of volunteering will have a permanent name tag. 'Veteran' volunteers who have had the necessary training and up-date sessions and have continued to be faithful, will receive their permanent name tags.

THE SUBWAY TERRACE AREA

by *Corky McLean*

Michael Lane, our Glensheen director, in a recent interview stated that the restoration of the subway terrace area is underway. It began on March 14 and is expected to be finished by June 15.

The subway and terrace have had much water damage. The cause of the leakage was discovered to be coming from the copper membranes located beneath the terrace.

In order to reach the copper membranes, first the terrace tiles have to be removed and then the bedding. New waterproof membrane will be installed as well as new drains for better drainage.

The exterior brick walls have sections that need to be replaced because of fracturing. The unsightly interior brick and the marble floor of the subway need to be cleaned of the salt deposits. New thermopane windows will be installed which will be movable.

At the same time a new lighting system will be installed and the exhibition area will be in readiness which is located outside of the recreation room covering 30 or 40 feet.

Upon completion of this project, about June 15, the Glensheen tour will again exit from the breakfast room to the terrace.

Docents Corner

by *Linda Vukson*

Glensheen's Docent Council has requested that some funds from the Institute of Museum Services Grant awarded to Glensheen be used to support the volunteer program.

At the April 5 meeting the following list of proposals was approved by the Docent Council.

Cultural and Educational

1. Prominent speaker on a topic of interest to volunteers on a motivational or educational theme.
2. Stipend to attend state or regional seminars and conferences by a Docent Council representative.
3. Stipend to visit other historical sites by a Docent Council representative to gain insight into their volunteer program.
4. Initial monies to establish a scholarship fund for docents pursuing studies relevant to Glensheen (architecture, interior design, museum studies, etc.)

Operational

1. Development of new volunteer brochure.
2. Sunshine fund for correspondence.
3. Materials and supplies for a historical record of docent activities.
4. Initial monies to develop a floral committee to care for and maintain plants, greenery and fresh flowers in the home in all seasons.

The above proposals are now to be submitted to Michael Lane for his approval.

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Glensheen
3300 London Road
Duluth, MN 55804

