

Brookside Gardens Celebrates Its 50th Anniversary

By William C. Miller III—Bethesda, Maryland

There was an excellent turnout on Friday, July 12th to celebrate Brookside Gardens' 50 years of service to the community. Built on the site of the former Stadler Nursery, Brookside Gardens, part of the Wheaton Regional Park in Wheaton, Maryland, officially opened on July 13, 1969, after four years of planning and construction. Today, many hundreds of thousands of visitors enjoy the 54 acres, which are supported by career staff, part-time staff, and a host of volunteers who maintain the formal gardens and garden features, the conservatory complex, the educational center, the walkways, and greenhouse facilities for the enjoyment of visitors in search of a connection to nature. Brookside Gardens provides opportunities to gather, relax, reflect, learn, and be inspired by the programs and by world-class display gardens featuring plants that are suitable for the region.

The formal program was hosted by Mike Riley, the Director of Montgomery Parks. Speakers included Amanda Allen, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of Governor Larry Hogan; Casey Anderson, Chairman, Montgomery Planning Board; Jeff Waldstreicher, Maryland State Senator,

District 18; Emily Shetty, Maryland State Delegate, District 18; Marc Elrich, Montgomery County Executive; Gabe Albornoz, Andrew Friedson, Tom Hucker, and Will Jawando, Montgomery County Council members; John Robinson, Acting Executive Director, Montgomery Parks Foundation; and Stephanie Oberle, Director, Brookside Gardens. Several speakers presented proclamations to Director Oberle. Noteworthies in the audience were acknowledged. They included former Brookside Gardens Directors David Vismara and Carl Hahn. Carl Hahn became the first Director of Brookside Gardens in 1969 and later was involved in sponsoring Barry Yinger's selection and importation of 387 Satsuki hybrids from the Kairyō Nursery in Japan in 1978.¹

At the conclusion of the program, refreshments were served, and attendees were invited to explore the gardens and to visit the very popular Wings of Fancy Live Butterfly Exhibit in its 22nd season (complimentary admission).

Brookside Gardens' 15-phase Master Plan is well underway and will be implemented over the next 20 to 25 years. Brookside Gardens will continue to be the gem of the park system, a popular year-round destination, and a shining example of what local government can do right.

▼ Fig. 1— Stephanie Oberle, Director of Brookside Gardens at the Brookside Gardens' 50th Anniversary Celebration on July 12, 2019.



References

¹ Hahn, Carl. July 1981. "Some Thoughts on Satsuki Azaleas." *The Azalean*. 3(3): 1, 7-8.

For the Record: Summer 2019 Issue

In the Summer 2019 issue, page 40, the wrong photo was used to illustrate the concept of "...a rounded, unpruned native azalea natural hybrid with a rounded crown that had developed without pruning." This photograph, by Charlie Andrews, of a natural triploid from Cherokee County, Georgia, shows this growth pattern. He says it is probably *Rhododendron flammeum* x *R. calendulaceum*.

