

# Homestead Notes



## The 1974 Philadelphia Flower and Garden Show

By Sally Bair  
Feature Writer

From the gusty March winds outside the Philadelphia Civic Center, it was a mere escalator ride down to a marvelous springtime - three and a half acres of orchids, gardenias, daffodils, bonsai and plant material of every description.

It was like entering a floral version of Alice's mystical wonderland for the 179 women who were treated by Penn-Jersey Harvestore to the 1974 Philadelphia Flower and Garden Show, one of the largest of its kind in the east.

There were educational exhibits, commercial exhibits and a wide variety of competitive classes, which literally offered something for everyone.

A mall with bubbling fountains surrounded by thousands of tulips greeted visitors to the show and set the stage for this fascinating world of springtime.

Probably the exhibits which were of most interest to the group were those which featured flowers and plant materials which are familiar and are readily found in southeastern Pennsylvania. However, the exotic flowers and superbly arranged formal gardens and greenhouse exhibits drew much comment and praise.

Each person finds his favorite in a flower show. Mrs. Paul Rohrer, Lancaster RD2, said, "Since I'm a farmer's wife, the most interesting thing to me was the flower barn." The exhibit was a commercial florist's representation of an outdoor flower market, using rustic ornaments to provide imaginative arrangements for fresh flowers. Mrs. Rohrer added, "The orchid display was tops. The whole show was really quite worthwhile."

Debbie Funk, Washington Boro RD1, agreed, "I hadn't visited before and I really liked it. I especially liked the orchids."

Of course, orchids always create excitement, and the several orchid exhibits, showing them in their natural settings with waterfalls and swampy areas were probably the favorite of many visitors.

Joan Witmer, Washington Boro RD1, said, "I enjoyed the unusual flowers most and especially the forced daffodils and irises. Also the giant flowers. The show went from one extreme to the other."

"I liked the flower arrangements with roses, and the displays of indoor plants," said Audrey Rohrer, Lancaster RD2.

There were many arrangements featuring indoor plants, but one of particular interest to plant enthusiasts with little space for their hobby was the exhibit of window sill collections which featured entire windows filled with suitable plant materials, and identified. One of the window sill collections was particularly interesting - it used only vegetables and herbs.

Another feature for apartment dwellers and those with little outdoor space was an exhibit by the Indoor Light Gardening Society of America featuring ways to grow and decorate with plants under artificial light. Several settings in the home were demonstrated, and specific information was given regarding accurate growing conditions.

Anna Lois McMichael, Lancaster RD6, expressed the sentiment of many when she said, "I expected to see more blooming flowers. But the displays were laid out really well." Janet Hess, Lancaster RD6, concurred, saying, "I was looking for more flowers and not so many greens." Both agreed it was an interesting show.

One of the educational displays which drew sustained interest throughout the week was that of The Pennsylvania State University. The display featured "The Bees and the Flowers," and according to Associate County Extension Agent Arnold G. Lueck, it scored two firsts. "It was the first to feature vertical gardens, an idea which allows you to have a garden in a small space, and it was the first time there were observation bee hives there," he said.

One of the reasons for the great interest in Penn State's booth was that it was manned with agents willing to answer lawn and garden questions. Lueck helped man the booth twice, and said that according to flower show officials, "The whole flower show attendance was way up this year." He added, "I think it reflects more interest in green plants and is part of the cycle we're presently going through. There is a lot more interest in horticulture than ever before." About the show itself he said, "What always impresses me is the great diversity of plant materials."

One of the more interesting of the horticultural classes judged (at least to this observer) was the rock garden division - some large rocks holding up to 25 different plant specimens, and some tiny rocks with a single specimen. Each was unique, and interesting.

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Two women with the Harvestore tour enjoy the roses entered in competition.



Some Lancaster County women come through a forest at the flower show.



Nature's Sculpture is the title of this niche arrangement.

