Winter 1983-1984

The winter of 1983-84 began quietly with the ground freezing very late in the season, and it apparently was not to be as tough a winter on the plants as 1958-59 had been. Gardener Ken Avery did remark however that "Nature was on a strange time schedule - everything was off from normal."

The Friends arranged for the reprinting of the Garden Guidebook, a run of 10,000 copies, the printing courtesy of Prudential Insurance Company. The Friends also received an invitation from the Minneapolis Institute of Arts to prepare a display for the Institute's first "Art in Bloom" show that was to take place in the early summer.

Spring 1984

In the Spring issue of The Fringed Gentian™, Friends President Caroline Price remarked on "the quiet wilderness atmosphere" of the Garden. She thanked Marie Demler and Natalie Adler for their work as volunteer coordinators as they were retiring from that position. Newsletter editor Betty Bridgman discussed the food value of cattails and other wild vegetables.

Gardener Ken Avery reported that the Garden was beginning to recover from the effects of Dutch Elm Disease and that during the winter a 100 year old tree had fallen on a new bench. Many plants were blooming early this spring even though 10 inches of snow blanketed the Garden on April 29th. Fortunately it was the final snowfall of the spring. Volunteers were requested to help remove brush in the Garden.

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Friends was held May 19th at the Martha Crone Shelter. Patricia Thomeson was elected President. The new volunteer coordinators would be Shirley Schultz and Joyce Smeby. Elizabeth Bryan was secretary; Natalie Adler was treasurer; Cindy Berg was Vice-president; Catherine Ordner was chair of small grants. Betty Bridgman continued as editor of The Fringed Gentian™, The Greater Yellow Lady’s-slipper bloomed that same day.
**Summer 1984**

A volunteer party was held at the Martha Crone Shelter in June with 25 attending. Retiring Volunteer Coordinators Marie Demler and Natalie Adler were in charge. Shirley Schultz and Joyce Smey became the new coordinators. It was a good summer for the plants. Temperatures fluctuated little from the average range and there was ample precipitation with some major rainfalls each month, one of almost 3” in June, and one of 2 1/4” in July.

The summer of 1984 was the first season that the Garden was open till dusk. This occurred from June through August. The shelter had two “seasonal naturalists” from 5 pm to dusk on weekdays and from noon to 6 pm on Saturday and Sunday. These naturalists were Linda Buehring and Laurie Haugen. A rotating “third person” assisted them (Mike Volpe and Sarah Lokensgard). There was a favorable public response to the naturalists and to the additional open time and a few Garden tours were led by the naturalists.

**Autumn 1984**

In September the Garden hours reverted to closing at 5 PM. An experiment in keeping the gate open until dusk during June through August, with naturalists available to help the public, was quite successful. This would lead in the future to adopt these later Garden hours. In *The Fringed Gentian™*, editor Betty Bridgman reports that 54 volunteers are recognized for Shelter volunteer duty; Friends President Patricia Thomeson presents a recipe for making acorn meal from White Oak acorns which then yields Acorn Bread and apparently is tasty. There is a page devoted to creating your own Wild Flower Garden.

Temperatures fluctuated more toward the end of the year and precipitation decreased with virtually none in November and very little snow in December leaving only a 2” snow depth going into 1985.

References:

Minutes of Meetings of The Board of Directors of The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Inc.

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Historical Climatology of Minneapolis-St. Paul Area by Charles Fisk.

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