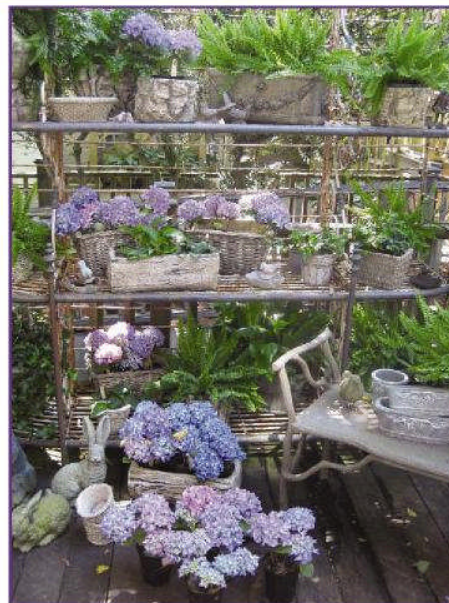


HYDRANGEA BOOT CAMP - JULY 2010

In July, Linda Orton and I were honored to be the first inductees at Hydrangea Boot Camp at the 2.25 acre Hydrangea Farm on Nantucket Island, MA, owned by Mal and Mary Kay Condon. Many of you were at our October 2009 meeting when Mal was our speaker and provided so much useful information about hydrangea care. We arrived on the island during record heat, and were so pleased to find the charming cottage we stayed in was air-conditioned and could not have been more comfortable. It was great to be in our little oasis, nestled in the middle of the nursery and it was very comfortable learning from Mal in the shade of the pines. I loved stepping out on the porch in the morning in the midst of so many blooming hydrangeas.

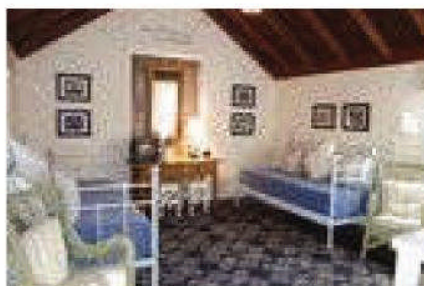
We had relaxed morning sessions on hydrangea species review, soil science & plant culture, pruning & pinching, and propagation.



Shop Display



Mal preparing hydrangea cuttings



The Cottage



Outside the Cottage door

One of the great things about the Hydrangea Farm is that it is a Nursery within a Garden. There are so many cultivars on display (150-200), many that you may not see often. Macrophyllas like 'Imperatrice Eugenia', 'Princess Beatrix', 'Wildenstein', 'Misty Blue', 'After Midnight', 'Pink Bouquet', 'Bits of Lace', 'Rotdrossell', 'Hobella', 'Mystical Opal', 'Topaz', 'Brestenberg', and that stunning bloomer 'Kasteln' that I love so much. And there are a few varieties of Mal's origin, like 'Madaket Lace', 'Malarth', and Penny's Pretty'. You will have difficulty keeping up with all the photos and their names, even though they are all well labeled.



Imperatrice Eugenia

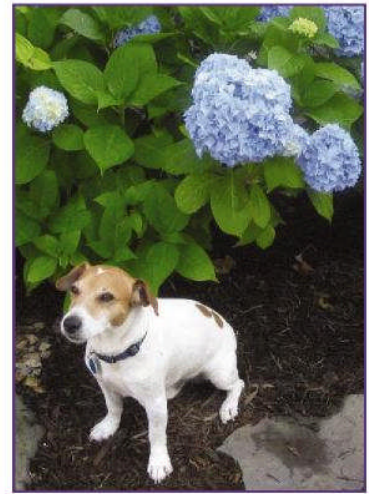


Mystical Opal



Malarth

We had wonderful company with the Condon's daughter Carol's adorable Jack Russell 'grand-dogs', Sketch and puppy Nikko, named after the infamous Nikko Blue hydrangea so prevalent on Nantucket and the whole Cape Cod area. They keep the numerous deer and rabbits on the run – well, at the rabbits anyway!



In the afternoons, we took the 10 minute bus ride (the stop is just outside the nursery) to town, or they have bicycles you can ride to the beach, or wherever. The shopping is wonderful, but my favorite is photographing the unique window boxes and planters all around town. The wonderful blooming hydrangeas at the charming cottages make it a hydrangea lovers delight.

It's a magical summer holiday in a fairy tale spot and you just won't believe how beautiful the sky and sea and flowers are. I hope you and a friend (the cottage is for two) get a chance to visit. Even if you don't stay on the island, it is a wonderful day trip on the Nantucket Ferry from several locations on Cape Cod. Once you go, you will want to go back. For more information, check out the Condon's website at hydrangeafarm.com, or on Facebook (Hydrangea Farm Nursery).

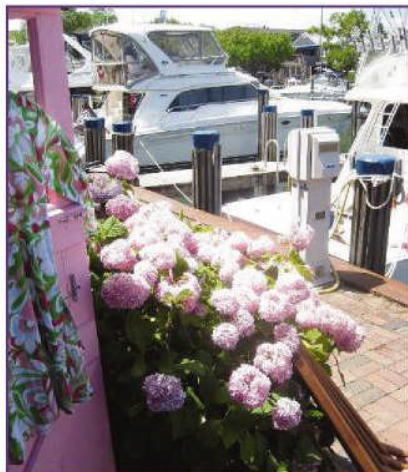
Linda Lanier



Sconset Cottage



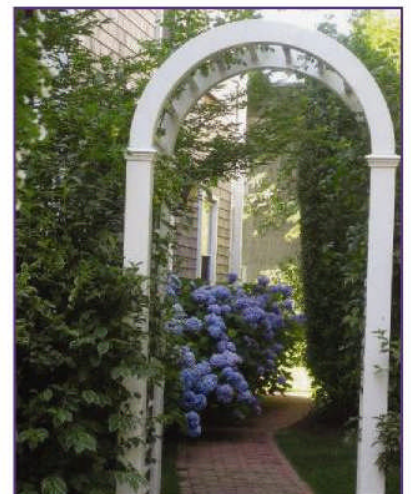
Sconset Cottage Garden



Shop on the wharf



Sconset Beach



Nantucket Arch