

August 1, 2026

Garden Club IN BLOOM

The Garden Club of York Quarterly Newsletter



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President's Message

Welcome to the August Edition of the Newsletter



There has been a lot happening since our last newsletter publication. The biggest news is that we won **The Governor's Trophy** at the State Convention! This makes us the best club in the state of Pennsylvania (at least for this year). **What an Honor!** Click [here](#) to see the winning submission.



Our downtown hanging baskets and containers are in full bloom and looking GORGEOUS! Did you see GCY on the Fox43 news? [Fox43:MissionMatters](#)

Our public gardens are looking SPECTACULAR (in spite of all the hot summer days)! And, our Youth Gardening Committee held Youth Workshops to help children who wanted to enter exhibits into the York Fair.

And speaking of The York Fair... The York Fair Committee was busy preparing for a flower show and submitting entries in Horticultural Hall. I hope you had a chance to participate or stop by to see all the displays and entries. The outcome was FABULOUS!

A floral show was held in conjunction with the quilt show at York College. The theme was "Tiny Treasures" and all the floral arrangements were miniatures. It was just LOVELY! I hope you had the chance to stop by.

The Strategic Planning Committee was busy preparing for a Named Scholarship Program (more on that at the October membership meeting).

(continued on page 2)

President's Message (Continued from page 1)

Programs for the membership meeting have been confirmed. And, the 2026/2027 yearbook has been updated and is ready to go to print (psst-- it's BEAUTIFUL).

The Adventure Committee found FUN things to keep us busy during the dog days of summer. They are already looking ahead at adventures for the fall and winter months (don't forget to check out SignUpGenius often for new adventures).

Believe it or not, the Holiday Luncheon Committee has met, picked a theme and began gathering ideas for this year's holiday luncheon. Also, the Christmas Tree Trot is being planned, so if you would like your home to be on the tour, please contact Faye Kroh or Kathy Crossman.

The Board will begin meeting again in August and has been busy preparing for the **fall picnic, which will be held on September 21, at John Rudy Park.** A true SUMMER PICNIC!

So you see, it has been a **very** busy summer for the GCY!

It takes many hands to accomplish all that we do. If you are new to the club or haven't found a committee to participate in, check out the yearbook and see if there is something that interests you. Or contact me and I will help you find something that is right for you.

"Full Steam Ahead" into Fall!

- Pam Paules

The Garden Club of York uses photos of members to publicize involvement in the community. If you object to having your photo included, contact the club president, Pam Paules.

The Garden Club of York Affiliations:

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

The Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

District IV of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

Up and Coming Adventures

August 18

[Cottage Herbs-Garden-to-table Workshop](#)

August 20

[Cradle Graves Guided Tour](#)

September 2

[Penn State Arboretum & Palmer Art Museum
Bus Trip](#)

September 18

[Terra Farms U-Pick Fields Tour](#)

October 8

[Thaddeus Stevens & Lydia Hamilton Smith
Center of History & Democracy Tour](#)

Click link or go to SignUpGenius on the GCY website gardenclubofyork.com, under *Membership-Members Only* section to see opportunities for adventures.

Newsletter Details

Garden Club IN BLOOM Newsletter Editor:
Beth Retallack

(The editor reserves the right to edit copy for clarity, accuracy or space requirements including photos.)

Proofreaders: Mary Lou Benton, Jane Dodson, Susan Fife, Elaine Yates, and Pam Paules

Garden Club IN BLOOM is published four times a year. Deadlines for Submissions for next issue of Garden Club IN BLOOM Publication:

November 1, 2026 issue— October 21, 2026

February 1, 2027 issue— January 21, 2027

May 1, 2027 issue— April 21, 2027

August 1, 2027 issue— July 21, 2027

Copies are distributed via email. A copy is also available on our website at www.gardenclubofyork.com.

Feeling Creative?

Hands-on workshops are available to members. Go to **SignUpGenius** under *Membership-Members Only* section on the GCY website gardenclubofyork.com to reserve your spot.

Flower Pressers Presented by Sally Lenker



Location: Two Brothers Restaurant
2935 E. Prospect Rd., York, PA

Times: 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Class Dates:

August 26
September 23
October 28

Times: 12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Class Dates:

August 18
September 15
October 20

Come and create many different projects!
Order breakfast or lunch and
enjoy your food while you create.

Floral Design Workshops Presented by Tonya Young



Location:

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

Times: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

or 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Workshop Dates TBD

Check SignUpGenius



Yarn Yackers

Whether you knit, crochet, or cross stitch,
come and join this group.

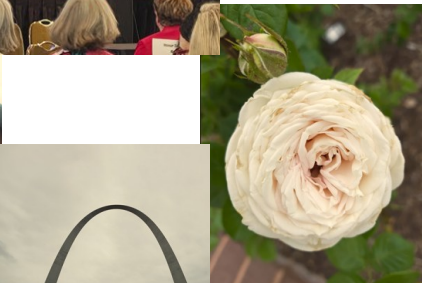
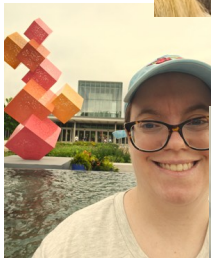
Contact Mary Alice Heilig



National Garden Club Corner

National Garden Club's Convention took place in May. Katy Keller from GCY attended the event in St. Louis and shared some pictures of her visit. She enjoyed the flower show, a rose talk, finding her brick on the path of success at NGC headquarters, and the Missouri Botanical Gardens. The biggest highlight for Katy was being back in Saint Louis, her hometown, which allowed her to visit family and friends.

— Beth Retallack



District IV Information

Annual Luncheon: The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania, District IV, is holding their annual meeting and luncheon which is hosted by the Garden Club of Harrisburg and the Linglestown Community Garden Club. The theme is **"Fall Into Flowers"**. It will be held on Thursday, September 3, 2026, at the Best Western in Harrisburg. The cost is \$55 per person. You must RSVP by August 21, if you would like to attend. Please visit this link for the schedule, menu and registration form. [Fall Into Flowers Luncheon](#)

Awards: District IV garden clubs received 19 awards at the state convention in Erie in April. The Garden Club of York received eight awards putting GCY in third place out of the 100 garden clubs in the state! Awards were received for Trash to Treasure, sponsoring two state scholarship winners, club membership, club yearbook, newsletter, membership awareness, website, and THE GOVERNOR'S TROPHY! The trophy is awarded to the club which distinguished itself by providing a year of well-balanced club programs, exceptional civic activity, club projects in all areas of NGC goals and objectives, and activity in state projects. GCY received an engraved crystal vase and the Governor's Trophy Silver Bowl which is kept for one year and returned at the next convention. [GCFP 2025 Awards Information](#)



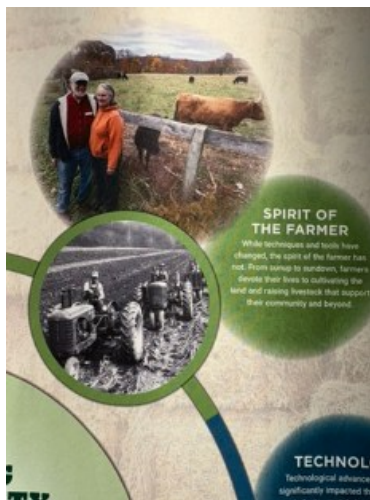
Spotlight On Members

In the News



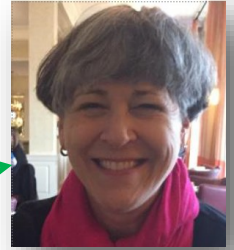
Marcia Vaupel, on left, was on the Today Show in New York City on Thursday, July 16. She and her sister were there for a Bon Jovi concert. They made a sign, dressed alike, and went to the Today show area and were greeted by Jenna Bush Hager.

Deb Martin and her husband Mike are pictured in a display at the York History Center. The display is about agriculture in York County. The picture was taken at the Martin's Twin Brook Farm in Hellam Township.



—Barb Zmolek

Membership Minute with Barb Zmolek



Welcome New Members

The first time you attend a garden club meeting, it can be overwhelming! The Membership Committee is ready to help. Stop at the **New Member** table in the church lobby and receive your gift bag, get help signing in, pick up your name tag, and meet some of the members. We will also answer any questions you may have. We are looking forward to meeting you and are happy to have you join us.

**Total Membership as of
August 1, 2026: 250**



New Members:

Martha Fleischer
Alyssa Kurtz-Price
Katherine Metzger
Erin Strine
Sherrie Wolfgang

Celebration of Quilts Quilt & Flower Show

The York Quilters Guild and The Garden Club of York joined together for a quilt and flower show on June 5, and June 6, at York College. It was a beautiful display of quilts on the first floor and petite flower arrangements on the second floor of the Grumbacher Sports and Fitness Center. There were 420 attendees over the two day event.



Pam Paules welcoming visitors to the flower show



Darlene and Tonya in front of Connie Ritter's quilts

Darlene Schardt, who is a member of GCY and The York Quilters Guild, coordinated the Tiny Treasures Quilt Show which featured artist Connie Ritter's quilts. Connie loves working with small pieces of fabric and cuts scraps down to 1.5 inches. She uses many different fabrics. Her quilts, made of small pieces of fabric, inspired the name for the quilt show.

Tonya Young coordinated "It's the Little Things" Flower Show which focused on petite designs. The Garden Club of York members combined what they learned at floral design workshops with their talent and creativity, and won many awards at the show.

Here are some of the award winning floral designs:

Designer's Choice Award Winner was Tammi Bortner for "A Little Bit More" class (section A). It is an American traditional mass design that features sweet William, white lavender, sea holly, globe amaranth, and astilbe in an sea urchin shell.



Tricolor Award winner was Cheri Yohe for "This Little Light of Mine" class (section B). It is an illuminary design with thistle, spray roses, love in a mist, juniper, and pear berries.

Award of Distinction winner was Tonya Young for "Tiny Bubbles" class (section C). It is a mass design with greveilea, craspedia, moss, and palm seed stem.



Award of Design Excellence is given to the highest scoring blue-ribbon exhibit in the entire design division. It is the top exhibitor award. Cheri Yohe's "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" class



entry (section D) won this honor. It is an illuminary design that features alstroemeria, hypericum berry, leucadendron, kangaroo paw, lily grass, purple weeping birch, and sphagnum moss.

Darlene Schardt won a second and third place at the quilt show for quilts that she featured in her home on the GCY Tree Trot in December.



— Beth Retallack

Spotlight On Activity

Flowers and Fellowship

The Flowers and Fellowship Committee visits nursing homes with flowers, vases, and ribbons. The group helps residents make a flower arrangement to take to their rooms and spends time chatting with the residents as they work together to create something beautiful. The residents are always so appreciative of the flowers and the social activity.

The committee visited The Residence at Fitz Farm on March 10, 2026, and were featured in an article in their June newsletter which highlights the therapeutic benefits of this activity.

Here is the article:

What We've Been Up To! Activity Spotlight: Garden Club of York

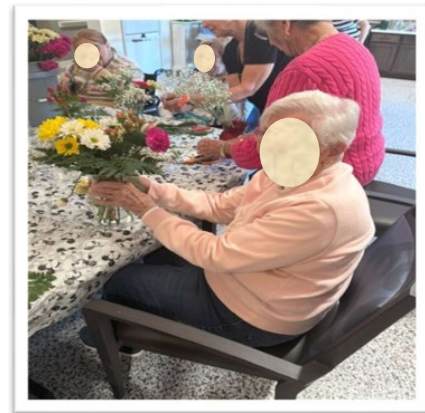
Residents recently enjoyed a beautiful morning of creativity and connection thanks to a special visit from The Garden Club of York. Volunteers generously brought flowers, supplies, and smiles as residents had the opportunity to create their own unique floral arrangements to take back to their rooms and enjoy.



We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the volunteers who shared their time, talents, and beautiful flowers with our residents. Activities like these not only brighten rooms but also create meaningful moments and lasting memories. Creative activities such as flower arranging encourage socialization, promote self-expression, support fine motor skills, and can spark positive memories and conversation among residents. Interested in learning more about The Garden Club of York? Visit their website: [Garden Club of York](https://www.gardenclubofyork.com)



Founded in 1922, The Garden Club of York is dedicated to promoting gardening, beautification, conservation, and education throughout our community. Their mission focuses on encouraging interest in flower arranging, gardening, and preserving the beauty of nature throughout York County.



If you are interested in joining Flowers and Fellowship, contact Rebecca Fager or Frances Locati.

—Beth Retallack

Two Bluebird Trails

Who Flew?

Seeing any bluebirds this summer? There has been a lot of activity in the nesting boxes at our garden club's two bluebird trails. See the table below to find out what we've observed in the nesting boxes at Country Meadows Retirement Community and at Cousler Park, since April.



What did we find?	Country Meadows 7 boxes	Cousler Park 14 boxes
# House Sparrow nests taken out	28	66
# House Wren nests taken out	0	2
# Bluebird nests	5	9
# Bluebird eggs	12	34
# Bluebird young	11	18
# Bluebirds fledged	11	5
# Tree Swallow nests	2	5
# Tree Swallow eggs	6	15
# Tree Swallow young	6	12
# Tree Swallows fledged	6	8
# Chickadee nests	0	0
# of GC members who monitored	9	9
# of weeks boxes were checked	14	15



Each week we record what is in the boxes as we walk the trails. It's often a mystery as to what took place in a box from a previous visit, so besides seeing the eggs and chicks, this makes

the walk even more interesting. We've observed eggs and chicks missing, a house sparrow nest built on top of a bluebird nest, eggs that never hatch, and even dead birds, both adult and chick.

It could be the heat, house sparrow or house wren invasions, other predators, or parents not making it back to the nest to feed their young. We can only speculate what could have happened.

The boxes are monitored from the first week in April until the last week in July. While some young birds may still fledge, we're at the end of the nesting season in August.

We will clean out all the boxes this fall and continue again to monitor the boxes on both trails next April. If you'd like to peek into the boxes and monitor the progress of bluebirds and other cavity nesting birds next year, be watching SignUpGenius for the schedule.



Learn about bluebirds and get your steps in too. Come join us and see how busy these little birds are. It's truly a miracle to see when that little bluebird or tree swallow lays four to seven eggs in the tidy little nest she built.

Who flew!

— Barb Zmolek



Membership Meeting Programs

October 19, 2026 Cut Flower Gardens Kim Keesee

Kim, a member of our Garden Club, is the creator and designer of Millie's Meadow, two expansive cut flower gardens near her home. She will share with us the preparation of seeds and seedlings for her garden, along with ideas for flower arrangement designs. Pictures of her gardens will amaze you!



November 16, 2026 Wallipini (underground) Greenhouse Amy Lau

Amy will familiarize us with the concept of a Wallipini (underground) greenhouse. She will explain how to build one and maintain it throughout the seasons. Her shared experiences will help you achieve success!

January 19, 2027 Managing our Watershed Deb Kronsteiner

Deb will share her knowledge and experience of watershed management. This program is a continuation of her talk last year and she will provide practical applications to personal and public property. She is happy to answer questions and discuss solutions.



February 15, 2027 A World of Song and Wonder Stan Lequire

A quick tour through the avian soundscape of our central Pennsylvania woods and backyards. What will you hear this spring? This presentation will have practical information for both beginning and experienced birdwatchers. Each participant will receive a checklist/cheat sheet for the songs and calls of local birds.



March 15, 2027 Creative Garden Designs

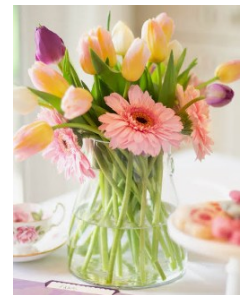
Kevin Kelly

Kevin is a Master Gardener from Dauphin

county and a well-known speaker. He is a retired physician who now devotes his time to sharing his landscape and garden design experience.

April 12, 2027 Flower Therapy and Spring Arrangements Carissa Mortenson

Carissa is the owner of Schoolhouse Flowers in Freeland, Maryland, and is also the director of Flourish Project Greenhouses and Gardens at First Fruits Farm. She will share how her love of flowers has brought her to develop an all inclusive program to cultivate growth, purpose and opportunity for those with special needs. She will also demonstrate her favorite flower designs.



Plants We Love: All of them!

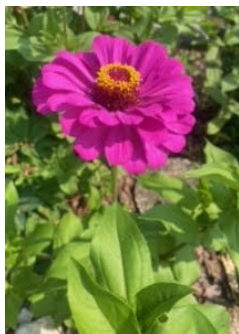
It is not easy to pick just one plant. I love them all! My all-time favorite bush would have to be the limelight hydrangea for its beauty and changing colors over the summer. It is



beautiful in every stage, and I went a little crazy and have eight of them! I have sprayed some of the

pyramid shaped blooms for the holidays and they make great dried arrangements. I enjoy seeing these plants thrive and bloom in their natural habitat.

This summer I have fallen in love with the yellow cannas paired with pink and burgundy dahlias in large pots and a bed of hot pink double zinnia's which I have never planted before. I purchased the seeds at a garden store in downtown Paris on my 70th birthday trip which makes them quite special and beautiful.



I'm also falling for sedum in pots. There are some with incredible pink blooms.



And then there is blanket flower which is such a strong performer from spring to fall despite the heat and humidity. It is a vigorous re-bloomer if regularly deadheaded. It is such a colorful addition to the garden!

Every time I think of a favorite, MORE keep popping up!



How can I forget PEONIES? I have about 25 and I especially love my yellow intersectional (ITOH) peonies.

I promise to stop now, but my brain just keeps thinking of more plants I love!

—Tammi Bortner

When I asked Tammi Bortner to pick her favorite plant for the “Plants We Love” column of the August newsletter, her answer kept changing and I not only enjoyed, but related to her enthusiasm about her plants. It seems like every month brings out a new bloom that we look forward to in our backyards.

—Beth Retallack



Spotlight On Committee

The Garden Store

Welcome back to another year of opportunity in The Garden Club of York! Membership meetings will begin and our public gardens will be winterized soon.

What does the Garden Club Store sell?

The Garden Store is an online shop that carries t-shirts, sweatshirts, aprons, as well as garden gloves and tools. You may need a shirt to wear while working on our various gardening projects and new gloves while you prepare your own garden beds for colder weather.



How do you access the Garden Club Store?



The holidays are approaching and every gardener appreciates a new soil knife in their stocking or as a hostess gift. Check us out online to see what we have to offer! Go to The Garden Club of York website GardenClubofYork.

Click on "Membership" and select "Members Only". Enter the password found on page 23 of your yearbook. Scroll down to the "The Garden Club Online Store" box for instructions and the link to start shopping. Everything is categorized for your convenience. You'll find the site is easy to use and just as secure as shopping on Amazon or L.L. Bean.

What does the committee do?

At each membership meeting, we have a table in the gym during lunches for merchandise pick up and for help using the online store. We contribute to the Holiday Luncheon and Garden Faire. We also will be selling Boscov coupons at the fall picnic and membership meetings until October 21. This program is no cost to us and each \$5.00 Boscov coupon is profit for our club and goes directly into our club's account!

How can I join?

We are welcoming new members and people interested in a leadership position. Both are a chance to meet your volunteer expectation and be pleasantly surprised by meaningful work. We are a small, invested group of club members. Please talk with a committee member for more information.

— Sue Bowman,
Co-Chair of The Garden Store



From the Desk of... A Plant Lover!

Gardening Tasks To Do in August:

1. Weed and mulch.
2. Deadhead. Deadhead. Deadhead! You will be so happy to see so many plants bloom again.
3. Eat fresh veggies every day.
4. Put in cover crops. They can include cereal rye to protect soil from erosion over winter, clover that fixes nitrogen to fertilize future crops, or oats. A quick growing fall cover that winter kills. All of these help prevent runoff, reduce weeds, and improve your garden soil.
5. Protect your harvest. Don't let those critters eat the best crops.
6. Tell your squash to STOP GROWING!
7. Prune your fruit bushes and vines.
8. Make a list of plants you want to divide. Divide at the end of September on an overcast and cooler day. Water before and after the replanting.
9. Compost and mulch around your strawberries.
10. Harvest the herbs you want to dry.
11. Preserve, process, trade or give away your extra produce.
12. Weed and mulch some more.
13. Start making that list of new spring bulbs you want to try.



May your gardens look as beautiful as ever. Pat yourself on the back—it looks gorgeous.

— Plant Lover

Tree Trot 2026

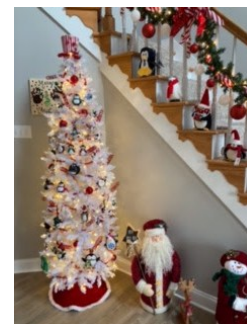
It's hard to believe we are talking about holiday events but as we all know, they will creep up on us quickly once fall approaches.

In that regard, it's time to start planning for our annual Tree Trot where members open their homes for other members to view their holiday decorations.

This is always a favorite December outing, and we like to have six to eight houses along the touring route. If you would like to be a host or hostess for this event, please contact either Kathy Crossman or Faye Kroh for more information.

The Tree Trot this year will be on Monday, December 14.

—Faye Kroh





Photos

Hanging Baskets and Containers Planting Day





Bees have super senses and anatomy.

Here's why:

- Bees have five eyes, two stomachs and beat their wings over 200 times per second.
- Bees have two big compound eyes on the sides and three small simple eyes on the top of their head to spot light.
- Bees have two stomachs— one normal stomach for food and a special “honey crop” stomach to carry nectar home to the hive.
- Bees taste with their feet. Bees walk on flowers and use special parts on their legs and antennae to taste.

Yes, bees do have weird habits:

- The Waggle Dance — forager bees do a figure eight “waggle dance” to show other bees the exact direction and distance to find yummy flowers.
- Lifetime work — one worker bee makes about 1/12 of a teaspoon of honey in their entire lifetime.
- No sleep — honey bees do not sleep the way humans do. They keep moving or alert, resting inside the hive.

All bees are extraordinary pollinators and complex social insects.

Queen Bee says....Please keep a shallow lid partially filled with water so my little workers can stay hydrated during these hot summer days.

— Queen Bee



September 3
District IV Annual Meeting and Luncheon
(see page 4 for details)

September 21
Fall Picnic at John Rudy Park
10:00 a.m.
(see page 15 for details)

October 19
Membership Meeting
St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
9:30 a.m.

Don't miss out!
Checkout the “Garden Buzz” email
for more opportunities!



Fall Picnic

The fall picnic location has changed. The picnic will be held at **John Rudy Park**.

Details:

Fall Picnic
Monday, September 21, 2026
10:00 a.m.
John Rudy Park – Pavilion Area
400 Mundis Race Road, York, PA 17406

More information on this will be sent out soon as well as a sign up for food donations. It will start at 10:00 a.m. with a tour of the gardens.



Good Stuff to Know

- The Garden Club Store has an online store. Visit the GCY website and go to the “Members Only” section to browse and place orders.
- Reminder...Please send all checks and monies due to The Garden Club of York to PO Box 7079, York, PA 17404.
- Email address for the Treasurer- GCofYorkTreasurer@gmail.com

Flower Trivia



Where is the oldest rose located?

England
France
Germany
Ecuador

Answer found on page 16

Give a
Weed An
Inch and It
will Take a
Yard

1st Vice President Daphne Leeder's Garden Tips And Quips



Helpful
Tips

August gardens are a vibrant celebration of late summer. This time of year, showcases a tapestry of colors and textures, as many plants reach their peak bloom. The warmth of August encourages a variety of flowers to thrive, creating a lively atmosphere in gardens. Sunflowers, zinnias, dahlias oh my!

The late summer garden often reflects



a sense of abundance and maturity. This period is also a reminder of the cyclical nature of gardening, where life and decay coexist.

The lushness of the garden serves as a reminder of the hard work put in during the spring and early summer, culminating in a vibrant display.



"The earth laughs in flowers"

Ralph Waldo Emerson

A Gardener's Life...



Flower Trivia Answer

The oldest living rose bush is over 1,000 years old and grows on the side of a cathedral in **Hildesheim, Germany.**

There is a legend about the **Thousand-year Rose**. German Emperor Louis the Pious was hunting and lost a delicate reliquary. He was devastated. Louis scoured the forest and vowed to build a church on the spot where it was found. The reliquary was found lodged in a rosebush. True to his word, Louis built the Hildesheim Cathedral next to the rosebush.

It is a dog rose (*Rosa canina*) with pale pink petals. During World War II, bombs devastated the cathedral, but the roots of the rosebush survived and it bloomed again.

