

Joyce Harris Wins Carol English Stancliffe Award for Horticultural Excellence

Mrs. Joyce Harris, a Mary Wade Home board member since 1990 and a resident of our Residential Care Home since August 2007, was awarded the Carol English Stancliffe Award for Horticultural Excellence in 2007 by the Garden Club of New Haven, of which she has been a member since 1978. The award, for her design of the gardens at Mary Wade, was presented to her at a lovely ceremony at the end of January 2008. Mrs. Harris has led and judged many flower-arranging classes, and the Connecticut branch of the Federated Garden Clubs has also created a national award for excellence in Mrs. Harris's name.



The Carol English Stancliffe Award originated in 2004 when Mrs. John (Hortence "Horty") O. Wilson gave the Garden Club a beautiful silver bowl engraved with the award's name and set on a base of lovely wood with silver plates to record the recipients' names. Her intent was to establish an award that would be bestowed on a Club member each fall who exhibits great enthusiasm and talent in maintaining a beautiful garden or growing an unusually challenging specimen. Previous recipients of the award are Natalie Melbardis Ronai (2004), Isabel Caride (2005), and Lucy Elliot (2006).

Mrs. Harris was instrumental in creating Mary Wade's beautiful garden. Situated in the central courtyard of Mary Wade, the garden is comprised of a wide expanse of lawn and a winding path bordered by a variety of shrubs and flowers. The shrubs vary in texture and height, and flowers are planted strategically throughout creating a pleasing palette of gold and red at the end of summer when the award is traditionally bestowed; the subtlety of the placement of the shrubs and flowers draw the eye to scan the entire expanse of space. In addition, there are sturdy, welcoming benches around the path to accommodate residents and visitors.



In designing and creating Mary Wade's garden, Mrs. Harris enlisted the help of members of the extended Mary Wade "family" — employees, residents, volunteers, and family members — many of whom had very little or no previous experience with gardening and horticulture. With their help, Mrs. Harris not only created an enchanting garden, but a space that is uplifting to the community which she has served for many years as a board member and of which she is now an active member. The Mary Wade garden is her inspiration and demonstrates her ability to use horticulture in various aspects of life. What is truly remarkable about Mrs. Harris's effort and achievement is that it was achieved in a public space of an organization that previously had no garden.

