

## 2025 Provisional Chair's Report

The club welcomed the new Provisional Class for 2025 at the Annual Meeting in August of 2024. The five women were presented with their yellow ribboned lanyards after being introduced to the club membership. Following the meeting, I wrote a personal note to each person congratulating them as members of the Provisional Class and alerted them to look for an informational email from me in late March or early April of 2025. See attached letter.

We began our summer activities by meeting at the Hadwen Garden for our first Monday morning of weeding on Monday, June 23. The Hadwen Garden Co-Chairs for the summer were Sarah Ann Miller and Robin Youngman. We met every Monday, except two (August 4, the week of our House Tour and a Monday, July 14, the week of "Nantucket by Design".) In all we met six Mondays over the summer at Hadwen. Our last session was August 18.

This summer, on the request of Paulette Boling, the Provisionals also worked at the Salt Marsh Garden, the native plant garden, a horticulture project of our club. In April before I sent my letter to the Provisionals, two Thursday mornings were scheduled to meet at the Salt Marsh Garden. Paulette spoke about the advantages of native plants and the history of our club's involvement in creating a native plant garden. These two meetings were in addition to working at Hadwen, not in place of working at Hadwen.

If a member had to miss a Monday at Hadwen, they could be excused if they worked at the Salt Marsh Garden that same week. This was not encouraged. One of the purposes of working at the Hadwen Garden is to have the experience of working alongside one's fellow class members, a chance to get to know one another, and to form a bond with the other members of one's Provisional Class. It's also a great opportunity for those of working with the Provisionals to get to know them. We have a long-standing club tradition of working at Hadwen Garden. When I asked this year's Provisionals if they'd prefer to work at the Salt Marsh, it was a resounding "no" – they prefer working in a more traditional garden like Hadwen. ( FYI -- A suggestion was made by Paulette that the Provisionals be required to work at the Salt Marsh instead of Hadwen – our compromise was to add the two visits).

Attending all General Meetings is required of Provisionals, unless excused. I explained the process of asking to be excused both for working at Hadwen and attending the General Meetings of the Club.

After the first General Meeting, I gave a luncheon for the Provisionals at the Westmoor Club. I included the Chair of Scholarships, the two Co-Chairs of the House Tour, the Chairs of Art with Blooms, the Membership Chair, and the Co-Chairs of Hadwen Garden as well as Kathleen. During lunch, each of these committee chairs was asked to speak about their particular committee. I thought this was a good way to introduce the Provisionals to club leaders as well as to learn about our events.

One of the first club activities was “Art with Blooms”. I encouraged the Provisionals to take part and several did create flower arrangements for a gallery. They were also asked to attend the club cocktail party the evening of the launch of “Art with Blooms” at Nina King’s home and to bring an appetizer. All Provisionals attended.

Flower Show (2026) Workshops – both a Horticulture Demonstration and a Floral Arranging Demonstration were open to the Provisionals with the Hort Workshop being optional and the floral arranging workshop being required. In the past, Gretchen Riley conducted the flower arranging workshop at her home but because of her absence, Nina King and Marianna Brewster conducted the demonstration and workshop at Marianna’s house. The Provisionals all seemed to have a positive experience. I did not require the Hort demonstration as I did not know about it when I sent the letter to the Provisionals in the Spring.

House Tour Tea. The Provisionals are required to staff the tea which includes helping with the set-up at 8:30 am and coming back to work a shift – either morning or afternoon. They are also asked to create a flower arrangement for the café tables or tea table. Faux Nantucket Baskets were distributed to the Provisionals at Hadwen the week before the tour. We also needed their help with the take-down. They all worked two shifts at the House Tour – one at the tea and one at a house as a docent. The sign-up for this was included on Sign Up Genius. The arrangements they brought were wonderful! Each person came on time for their shift and worked enthusiastically as hostesses serving the tea. I asked that the baskets be returned the following Monday at Hadwen (these baskets came from storage and were brought to me by Properties and returned to Betsy Carey, Hospitality Chair, to be used at the Annual Meeting Luncheon as centerpiece containers).

(The Tea Chair was Abby Harding Lipsey).

During the course of working together at Hadwen, we discussed the skit the Provisionals give at the Annual Meeting and the possibility of a gift from the 2025 Class to the Hadwen Garden. This group decided on a gift certificate from Surfing Hydrangea Nursery to be used for the purchase of plants for the garden. This idea was brought forward by the NHA’s gardener.

The Chair of Provisionals is a member of the Membership Committee and takes part in a Membership Tea (this year at Bonnie Ford's home) for prospective candidates for the following year. Candidates and their Sponsors come together to the tea to meet the Membership Committee. This event is organized by the Chair of the Membership Committee. The Provisional Chair also receives the written applications to review ahead of time.

Following the Membership Tea, there was a Membership Meeting conducted by the Chair to discuss the candidates and vote on them. There were eight applications this summer for the 2026 Class and eight candidates were accepted as Provisionals. At that meeting, we also voted on the five 2025 Provisionals to become Active Members.

New lanyards were ordered for both the 2025 and 2026 Classes and will be presented at the Annual Meeting where we will welcome the Provisionals of 2025 to become Active Members and the members of the 2026 Class as Provisionals.

Respectfully submitted,

Merrielou Symes

August 19, 2025