



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

For Immediate Release
November 19, 2008

Enid A. Haupt, Leading Patron of American Horticulture, Awarded Gold Medal of The New York Botanical Garden

November 20, 2008

The Board of The New York Botanical Garden will present the Gold Medal of The New York Botanical Garden to Enid A. Haupt posthumously on November 20, 2008. The Gold Medal is awarded very infrequently to individuals who have made significant contributions to the life of the Botanical Garden and the fields of botany and horticulture. Wilson Nolen, Chairman, will present the award at the 117th Annual Meeting of the Corporation of The New York Botanical Garden. Mrs. Haupt's niece, Mrs. Leon Polsky, will accept the Gold Medal on her behalf.

Enid Haupt was the greatest patron American horticulture has ever known and a historic figure in the life of The New York Botanical Garden, active in the Garden for more than 30 years. As early as 1973, the Botanical Garden honored Mrs. Haupt with its Distinguished Service Award for her contributions that reflected "her belief in the power of Nature to refresh and restore."

Mrs. Haupt joined the Botanical Garden's Board in 1975, at a time when the Conservatory was in serious need of repair and renovation. Modeled after the glasshouse at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, it was hailed as one of the world's truly elegant structures upon its completion in 1902. The Garden's iconic and perhaps most treasured feature, it is the preeminent Victorian-style glasshouse in America. Over the years, it had steadily deteriorated, but plans for its demolition were halted in 1975, when the building was declared a New York City landmark. However, the City's fiscal crisis at the time precluded the use of capital funds for the Conservatory's renovation.

Mrs. Haupt's initial gift funded the restoration of the Conservatory's *Palms of the Americas Gallery*. Within the next two years, she underwrote the restoration of the entire building. In 1978, when it was renamed to honor her generous support, she said, "Restoration of this beautiful complex has been a marvelous experience. Growing flowers and living with nature enhances life enormously, and it gives me great satisfaction to share this philosophy with the public."

In the 1980s and 90s, Mrs. Haupt's subsequent gifts helped advance the Garden's collections and programs as well as the ongoing rehabilitation of the Conservatory. The grand reopening of the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory in May 1997 marked the beginning of a new era of outstanding public horticulture at the Garden and symbolized its unprecedented investment in the related fields of science and education.

Mrs. Haupt's gifts for the Conservatory played the most important role in the renaissance of The New York Botanical Garden as an institution. Her interest and generosity during a very difficult period turned the tide. Residents of New York City owe her a debt for preserving an important piece of the City's architectural heritage. And more than two generations of visitors to the Garden have been grateful for her unwavering and unprecedented contributions to American horticulture.

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit our Web site at www.nybg.org

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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