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Centerport Garden Club Revitalizes, Replants Vanderbilt Museum Rose Garden

Vanderbilt Rose Garden

The Vanderbilt Museum celebrated the revitalization, replanting, and resurrection of the Museum's Rose Garden at a ribbon-cutting event on June 13.

The garden – with its centerpiece fountain and brick pathways – is once again in glorious full bloom and offers a striking view of Northport Bay. The restoration was made possible by a generous anonymous donation of \$5,000.

Executive Director Elizabeth Wayland-Morgan presided over the event. Other speakers included James Kelly, President of the Museum's Board of Trustees, and officers of the 65-member Centerport Garden Club, including Co-Presidents Wendy J. Wolfson and Cathy Cresko, and Rose Garden Committee Co-Chairs Nancy Schwartz and Linda Pitra.

The rose bushes, which were wiped out in 2020 by the highly contagious and incurable Rose Rosette virus, had to be removed, along with the infected soil. The ground had to lie fallow for two years because the disease survives on tiny pieces of roots and other rose debris in the soil. Only then could the club – working with Operations Supervisor Jim Munson and his crew – replace the top 6-8 inches of soil and plant 57 new rose bushes representing 13 varieties.

“The varieties were selected for their disease resistance and how they will thrive on Long Island in an organic garden,” Nancy Schwartz said.

The club also planted six climbing hydrangeas, 17 hydrangea bushes including a variety that is sun-tolerant, eight boxwoods, and added several pollinator-friendly plantings. The project took three and a half years to complete.

Two years later, the club was able to reintroduce new roses. “By then we had planted the boxwoods for architectural interest and the hydrangeas to

define the entrances, and installed a lovely arbor,” Schwartz said. “We were still planting rose bushes this spring just before the ribbon-cutting event.”