

Legacy of Meadowburn Farm and Heirloom Dahlia Sale

On Wednesday, April 6, The New Canaan Beautification League will present The Legacy of Meadowburn Farm, the next topic in the highly popular monthly series on horticulture and preservation. Hosted at the New Canaan Nature Center, social time will begin at 9:30 am, followed by a talk and slide show by Quill Teal-Sullivan of Meadowburn beginning at 10 am. Heirloom dahlia tubers from this historic farm will also be available for sale following the talk. This presentation is free and open to the public.

Meadowburn Farm in Vernon, New Jersey, was once the country home of Helena Rutherford Ely, a pioneering figure in American horticulture at the turn of the 20th century. Founding member of the Garden Club of America, she established her gardens around the main residence at Meadowburn during the course of a forty-year period. Through trial and error, she developed the practical “hands -on” knowledge that informed and inspired her three widely influential books on hardy gardening. In her day, Ely was considered one of the premier garden experts in America and her gardens at Meadowburn were recognized as among the finest in the country.

Presenter Quill Teal-Sullivan, Garden Manager at Meadowburn since 2013, will discuss the rich history of the gardens, which are currently undergoing restoration and rehabilitation. The talk will focus on the heirloom plants that have been discovered during the preservation efforts, including 7 varieties of dahlias that have been planted each spring continuously for over 100 years. Quill will also give a brief overview of the basic horticultural practices used in Meadowburn’s dahlia garden, including planting, staking, storage, and dividing.

Quill received her B.A. in Biology focused in plant sciences from Colorado College and an M.S. in Public Horticulture from the Longwood Graduate Program at the University of Delaware.