

In Memory *Jean L. Cox*

1931-2000

One of the Azalea Society's best friends Jean Cox passed away on November 25, 2000. Born in Massachusetts April 12, 1931, Jean was a retired FBI computer analyst. The things Jean loved most in this world were bowling, anything having to do with Scotland (especially Scotty dogs), and azaleas. She would always have treats for your dogs if she were coming for a visit. With azaleas, she was as generous as she could be, always giving away plants, transporting plants, and propagating new plants to give away. She was also a member of a professional society for retired FBI workers and a member of the Scottish Trust. She volunteered for the National Arboretum's azalea restoration project from June 1991 through spring of 1997. Working from the beginning of the George Harding Memorial Garden project in the fall of 1992 until the fall of 1999, she became one of the "steadfast eight" volunteers there. And as I understand, she also helped out for George Harding himself at his home. She supported the Special Olympics, Friends of the National Arboretum, and the Brooklyn Botanical Garden through donations.

To say that the Azalea Society of America was Jean's family is an understatement. Joining the ASA around 1984, Jean belonged to numerous chapters (Northern Virginia, Brookside Gardens, and as an associate of Ben Morrison) as well as belonging to the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. She ran the ASA Bookstore since 1993. Jean was always looking for more azaleas to propagate in her "cloche," which was how she referred to that

small tent-like structure where she made many, many azaleas from cuttings. She was a gifted artist as could be seen in the photos from the 1992 ASA convention hosted by the Ben Morrison Chapter (see cover photograph for the September 1992 issue of **THE AZALEAN**). Jean hand-painted several T-shirts with colorful azaleas personally selected for the person owning the T-shirt. She was a gifted cross-stitcher; many of Jean's favorite people own beautifully framed masterpieces. (Mine is of an azalea.)

Jean was well known here at the National Arboretum, for her lively conversations on everything from politics to her love of dogs. When she began as a volunteer here, the Azalea Collections were almost in ruins. They were so covered in vines and there was so much dead wood, no one would have believed that she, along with four other volunteers, would be able to revive the azaleas again in just another five years. Jean was a driving force in keeping my team motivated and undaunted during the huge project that loomed ahead. Jean came through the hottest days of summer and the coldest, frostiest days of winter. She taught my other volunteers more about azaleas than I ever could. I know this was the same effort she put into the work at the George Harding Garden at River Farm, in Alexandria, Virginia.

She was a friend. I could call her any time, day or night,

knowing that she'd be up late at her cross-stitching or reading a book. We went on numerous adventures together, including a canoe trip on the Potomac River and visiting gardens. She was my roommate at several conventions. She would always bring the Glen Fiddich Scotch, chilled, and decorated plaid napkins. Many of you have shared similar experiences with her. I know she would want to say good-bye to so many of you, like Margie Jenkins and Bill McDavitt. She will be missed.

*Written by Barbara Bullock—
Washington, DC*



Taken at the 1993 ASA Plant Sale held at the US National Arboretum, this photo captures Jean Cox in action, as she greets "Lucky", a dog owned by fellow USNA volunteer Frank Despit. (Photo by Barbara Bullock.)