

# The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden



## A Birdbath in the Prairie

In 1990 the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden acquired a granite boulder for purposes of creating a stone birdbath to be placed on the central hill of the Upland Garden in the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden. The cost of the project was paid for with funds received from a bequest of Dr. Marian Grimes, a long time member of the Friends who served on the Board of Directors and was volunteer coordinator for the Martha Crone Shelter from 1971 through 1980.

The committee of volunteers recruited for this project were Kathryn Stennes (also the editor of *The Fringed Gentian*), Geri Benavides and Connie Bartz-Lavoie. They traipsed around the state in the winter weather looking at boulders and like many things we look at, they eventually settled on the first one they viewed, which was a 1,200 lb. model.

The chosen one was found at Gray Cloud Island in Washington County and was donated to the Friends by Tim Duncan of J. L. Shiely Stone which had operations on the Island.



Next the bird bath had to be carved into the stone so it was moved to West Lake Landscape in Eden Prairie so that stone carver Jon Roe could create the bird bath. Next, it was desired to have the date incised on the stone, so another move was made to Drake Marble in St. Paul where sculptor Henry Valiukas carved the date "1990" into the side of the stone.

Finally on April 5th, the boulder entered the Garden via the Prairie gate. By using three pieces of plywood as bases and levers, Gardener Gary George and two Park Board Staff helpers rolled it up the hill and placed it where it now sits, next to the large White Oak that dominates the hill. There is a bench there that looks out past the Oak and over the bird bath to the far end of the Upland Prairie Garden, providing a restful spot for both humans and birds.

This article was written and compiled from information recorded in Board Meeting minutes of the Friends and from text in several issues of *The Fringed Gentian*™ from 1990.

Text - Research, text and photos by Gary Bebeau