The Southern Garden History Society

The Society was founded in 1982 as an outgrowth of a continuing series of conferences on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes held at Old Salem in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

The purpose of the society is to promote interest in Southern garden and landscape history, in historical horticulture and in the preservation and restoration of historic gardens and landscapes in the South.

An annual meeting of the membership is held every spring to hear reports of research and projects of members, to visit gardens of importance in the vicinity, and to provide an opportunity for stimulating interchange of information and ideas among members.

A quarterly bulletin, Magnolia, is published by the society, and includes research papers, news of landscape restoration projects, and related member activities.

The Cherokee Garden Library in Atlanta, Georgia is the repository for books and documents of the Society.

For more information contact:
Southern Garden History Society
Old Salem, Inc.
Drawer F, Salem Station
Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27108

Registration Information

Annual meeting registration includes all programs, meals, transportation noted on the schedule and complimentary admission to Oakleigh and private gardens. (Sunday tours of Magnolia Cemetery, historic Mobile and the Eastern Shore are extra.)

A block of rooms has been reserved for meeting registrants at the Adam’s Mark Hotel. The Adam’s Mark is the site of the annual meeting sessions and banquet.

For more information about the 1995 Annual Meeting contact:
Holle Briskman
1406 Brown Street
Mobile, Alabama 36604
(334) 432-8471

Southern Garden History Society
1995 Annual Meeting

The Gulf Coast Influence:
Landscapes and Gardens of Mobile
April 21-23, 1995
Mobile, Alabama
The Gulf Coast Influence: Landscapes and Gardens of Mobile

While the Southern Garden History Society has met several times in Southern coastal cities, we have not been exposed to the drama and romance of the Northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Mobile is one of a handful of cities which, during its colonial period, fell under the sovereignty of all three major European colonial powers: France, Spain and Britain. Speakers will examine how this has influenced the unique urban landscape of modern Mobile. Topics will include an overview of the colonial history of Mobile, the oaks of Mobile, a history of Mobile architecture and a discussion of the diaries of Bishop Portier, who made observations of the flora of the area in the early 1800s. There will be slide presentations demonstrating the process of restoration of historic urban and rural homes and gardens in Alabama.

On Friday afternoon we will take a walking tour of the Oakleigh Garden District. This is a neighborhood of 19th and early 20th century homes that have been or are being restored. It is a wonderful example of young people reviving the homes and gardens of a declining neighborhood. We will end the tour at Twelve Oaks, a lovely 19th century house on historic Washington Square, where you will be served cocktails.

Friday evening you will be on your own and will probably choose to visit the recently revived Dauphin Street and Bienville Square area, which is an easy walk from the Adam's Mark Hotel. This has become a petite Vieux Carre with numerous good restaurants, clubs and shops. Saturday after lectures we will visit Bellingrath Gardens, where chief horticulturist Pat Ryan will give us a brief history of the gardens plus some insight into the camellia/ azalea industry in the Mobile area.

On Sunday you will have your choice of optional tours of Historic Mobile, the Eastern Shore of Mobile Bay (an exquisite resort area with many older homes), or Magnolia Cemetery (conduct by historian John Sledge).

The Program
(Unless otherwise indicated, all events take place at the Adam's Mark Hotel)

Friday, April 21, 1995
9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Registration at the Adam's Mark Hotel. Free time to visit downtown Mobile historic sites.

1:00-3:40 p.m.
The Diaries of Bishop Portier
Most Reverend Oscar Lipscomb, Archbishop of the Diocese of Mobile and former president of the Alabama Historical Association

Overview of the Colonial History of Mobile
Jay Higginbotham, author, Old Mobile: Fort Louis de la Louisiane 1702-1711

Architectural History of Mobile
Mark McDonald, Director, Mobile Historic Development Commission

The Oaks of Mobile
Ron Jackson, City of Mobile Urban Forester

4:00 p.m.
Buses depart for Oakleigh Garden District.

4:00-7:00 p.m.
Walking tour of Oakleigh Garden District followed by cocktails at Twelve Oaks.

7:00 p.m.
Buses return to hotel. Evening on your own.

Saturday, April 22, 1995
8:30-10:00 a.m.
Restoration of a Southern Urban Property
James I. Bargainier

St. Elmo: A Southern Expression of the Downingesque
Terry Yemm

10:00-10:15 a.m.
Coffee

10:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
The French Vine and Olive Colony
Nicholas Braswell

Restoration of a Southern Rural Property
Ed Givhan

12:30 p.m.
Buses depart for Bellingrath Gardens. Box lunch either on the bus or on arrival.

3:15 p.m.
Buses leave Bellingrath.

6:30 p.m.
Cocktails followed by banquet at Adam's Mark Hotel. Annual meeting before dinner.

Sunday, April 23, 1995
Registrants are invited to choose from three optional tours. Transportation will be provided from the hotel. See information in registration packet for more details.

1:00-3:30 p.m.
Comprehensive tour of Magnolia Cemetery led by historian John Sledge. Old roses should be at their peak.

1:00-5:00 p.m.
Visit Mobile's historic sites on the Historic Mobile Tour, or see the sites surrounding Mobile Bay on the Eastern Shore Tour.