2002 marks twenty years of being the Southern Garden History Society. As the country’s first regional organization dedicated to discovering, preserving, studying, restoring, and disseminating information about its historic gardens and landscapes, SGHS has attracted members well beyond the confines of the Southern United States. Through dialogue and exchange of ideas and research, this association has given us the opportunity to deepen our knowledge and understanding of our past and of those individuals and groups who left their imprint on the land. Thus, the 2002 Annual Meeting in Natchez, Mississippi was a celebration of the collegiality we have experienced over two decades of visiting some of the finest public and private early gardens in the South. Often these are friends seen only once a year, or in some cases friends now held only in our memories.

We thought it best to commemorate this milestone year with a special issue of Magnolia, in which we recall the society’s past and pay tribute to certain individuals who helped turn the idea into a reality. This also is a time to reaffirm our commitment to take on the many challenges facing the preservation of our unique Southern gardening heritage in the decades ahead.

— Peggy Cornett and Ken McFarland
October 11-12, 2002. 2002 Southern Garden Symposium. Annual symposium held in St. Francisville, Louisiana includes lectures, gardening demonstrations, and tours of various historic gardens and sites such as Hemingbough, Afton Villa Gardens, Rosedown Gardens, Market Hall, Grace Church, and Catalpa Plantation. Speakers include Bill Fontenot, Norman Winter, John Elsley, Holly Shimizu (executive director of the US Botanic Garden), and John Alex Floyd, with Dr. Neil Odenwald as master of proceedings. For more information call (225) 635-3738 or write to: Southern Garden Symposium, P. O. Box 2075, St. Francisville, LA 70775.

October 25-26, 2002. “Oktober Gartenfest.” An annual fall gardening program held at Winedale near Round Top, Texas. The event is hosted by the University of Texas Center for American History Winedale Division in cooperation with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System. For information, contact Bill Welch, (979) 690-9551, wc-welch@tamu.edu; or Mary Anne Pickens, (979) 732-5058, gravel@wcnet.net.

February 28, 2003. “Preserving Gardens of the Southeast,” at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. More details will be posted in the next issue of Magnolia. For further information, contact Neal Weatherly, Jr. at the School of Environmental Design, (703) 542-0943; nweatherly@arches.uga.edu or Allen Henderson at (706) 542-2237, al.Henderson@gctr.uga.edu. Registration brochures will be available on Georgia Center’s Web site: gactr.uga.edu/conferences/index.html after September 25th, 2002.

April 11-13, 2003. 21st Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme, “Atlanta’s Landscape Legacy,” will focus on Southern garden literature and writers such as Elizabeth Lawrence, the history of gardening in the Atlanta area and the state, and the work of Neel Reid and of the Olmsted firm in Atlanta. Visits are scheduled for Atlanta’s Northside gardens and tours of the Atlanta History Center Museum and Gardens and the Cherokee Garden Library. For information, contact Staci Catron-Sullivan at (404) 814-4046; fax (404) 814-4175; SCatronsullivan@AtlantaHistoryCenter.com

September 25-27, 2003. “A Genius and His Legacy: Frederick Law Olmsted in the South,” the 14th Conference on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes held at Old Salem, Inc. For information, contact Kay Bergey, (336) 721-7378; bergeymk@wfu.edu; or write her at: Drawer F, Salem Station, Winston-Salem, NC 27108.

October 2, 2003. “The Botanical Journey of Lewis and Clark,” Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Lectures by Peter Hatch, director of Monticello’s gardens and grounds, and Dr. James Reveal, author of Gentle Conquest, and botanical scholar with the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia on the unique Lewis and Clark collection of original plant specimens from the famed expedition. For more information, call (804) 262-9887; or see the botanical garden education series Web site at: www.lewisginter.org
The Founding and Early Beginnings Of the Southern Garden History Society: An Informal History

By: Flora Ann Bynum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

The Southern Garden History Society had a long gestation period, from the presentation of the idea until its birth two years later. William Lanier Hunt of the Hunt Arboretum, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, proposed a garden history society for the South at the first conference on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes, held in Old Salem, Winston-Salem on April 26-28, 1979.

Serving on the conference committee, John B. Flowers III represented the Stagville Center of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Durham, North Carolina, and I represented Old Salem. John and I met with Bill Hunt in Chapel Hill at the North Carolina Botanical Garden December 11, 1979, and again on January 11, 1980, to discuss how to go about forming such a garden history society for the South.

At the second conference on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes, held October 2-4, 1980, Bill once again eloquently presented the idea of such a society. People began writing and asking about the Southern Garden History Society, wanting to join. So we really went to work then, determined that the society would be formed before the third conference.

On December 17, 1981, John, Bill, and I held our third meeting, again in Chapel Hill. I had prepared a rough draft of the by-laws and John had obtained information on incorporation from the Office of the Secretary of State in Raleigh. We made a list of potential directors and we each took names of people to call to ask them to serve on the society’s first board.

Finally, with an outline of purposes and a list of the founding board of directors in hand, John, Bill, and I met in Raleigh in the Office of the Secretary of State March 15, 1982, and signed the papers of incorporation, which John had obtained and prepared earlier. In a few weeks the society’s Articles of Incorporation (our charter) arrived and we were officially in business.

The first directors were Flora Ann Bynum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; P. Duncan Callicott, Nashville, Tennessee; Hugh G. Dargan, Camden, South Carolina; John B. Flowers III, Durham, North Carolina; Glenn L. Haltom, Natchez, Mississippi; Catherine M. Howett, Decatur, Georgia; Florence P. Griffin, Atlanta, Georgia; Peter E. Martin, Williamsburg, Virginia; Geraldine M. Moncrief, Monroe, North Carolina; Jerry S. Powers, Houston, Texas; David H. Rembert, Jr., Columbia, South Carolina; and A. St. Clair Wright, Annapolis, Maryland.

The founding board held its first meeting May 6, 1982, immediately preceding the third conference on

Florence and Bill Griffin with Faith Byler, at Henkel Square in Round Top, Texas 1993

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University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. [Note: the Cherokee Garden Library in Atlanta was made official archives of the society May 1990, as the Southern Historical Collection accepts only manuscripts.] We adopted a resolution establishing a bank account and the board held a very serious discussion of the goals and purposes of the society.

As no one wanted to handle the finances of the society, I took on this task. Old Salem Incorporated agreed to serve as headquarters for the society, allowing us to use their mailing address, duplicating equipment, and so on. Bill Hunt announced the formation of the society at the landscape conference; we had membership forms available and began accepting members. The society was underway!

Duncan Callicott was host in Nashville to the second board meeting October 29, 1982. Present were directors Flora Ann Bynum, Hugh Dargan, John Flowers, Florence Griffin, and Glenn Haltom, with Jane Symmes of Madison, Georgia, as a guest. Duncan entertained us royally with visits to historic garden sites in and around Nashville. The society at this time had thirty-six members, twenty-four of whom had joined at the May landscape conference, and twelve since.

At the Nashville meeting, Hugh Dargan proposed that a membership brochure be printed. Hugh, John Flowers, and I met in my home in Winston-Salem February 4, 1983, to outline a brochure. Hugh took the responsibility of preparing and getting the brochure printed in time for the society’s first annual meeting in April. Hugh also had a revised membership brochure printed in 1984. The society’s first annual meeting was held in Atlanta April 15-16, 1983 and was chaired by Florence Griffin. Our third board meeting was held April 17 in Florence’s home. By this time we had eighty-six members.

The society received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service dated October 24, 1984, stating that the society is exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Zack Bynum of Winston-Salem, North Carolina prepared the papers for the tax-exempt status and followed them through with the IRS. By its third year the society was well underway, armed with the basic equipment of organizational life — charter, by-laws, officers and board, mailing address and headquarters, a bank account, printed materials, and tax-exempt status.

Our fourth board meeting was held October 29, 1983 in my home following the fourth conference on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes. Our fifth board meeting was April 6, 1984 in Natchez, Mississippi, in the home of Glenn Haltom, preceding the second annual meeting of the society April 6-7. At the annual business meeting, new officers were elected: John Flowers, president; Catherine Howett, vice-president; and Flora Ann Bynum, secretary-treasurer. New board members also were elected: Harriet Jansma of Fayetteville, Arkansas, Dr. Edgar G. Givhan of Montgomery, Alabama, Cleo Barnswell of Shreveport, Louisiana, and Ben Page of Nashville, Tennessee. Going off the board were Mr. Powers, Mrs. Moncrief, Dr. Martin, and Mr. Callicott, who was named ex-officio member as past president.

By April 1985, the third annual meeting in Annapolis, Maryland, the society had an active, enthusiastic membership of 233, and had become widely recognized as the first regional garden history society in the country.
Evolution of *Magnolia*, the Society’s Quarterly Bulletin

Aside from its annual meetings, which concentrate on the garden and landscape history of the host site, the Southern Garden History Society maintains a strong connection with its membership through a variety of publications; most notably its quarterly bulletin. This journal began as an informal newsletter edited by John Flowers and was titled “Hoe and Tell.” Harriet Jansma became editor of the newsletter (later changed to the news bulletin) in 1984. The name “Magnolia” was selected for the newsletter by the board at its October 13, 1984 meeting in Chapel Hill. Florence Griffin was authorized to have an Atlanta graphic artist create an appropriate “logo” for the society’s printed stationery and newsletter masthead, which was prepared by the April 1985 board meeting.

George Stritikus, with the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service, printed and distributed the initial newsletters. Dr. Givhan’s office took over the printing and mailing for some time until Harriet began serving as both editor and “production manager.” Ed Givhan’s office handled our mailing lists until 1991. Under Harriet’s editorship, the *Magnolia* evolved into a substantive and informative journal that made available original research on regional topics. The bulletin contained updates on current research and descriptions and diary accounts, including invaluable lists of plants, of gardens and historic sites throughout the South. Harriet remained editor of *Magnolia* through the spring of 1990, when then associate editor Peggy Cornett (Newcomb) assumed this role. Kenneth McFarland, then director of the Stagville Center in Durham, became associate editor and both continue in these positions today. In 1999 Davyd Foard Hood of Vale, North Carolina officially joined the team as book review editor. For the winter 1992 issue, the society’s 10th anniversary year, Peggy had a graphic design and printing firm near Charlottesville professionally re-design the format and layout of *Magnolia*.

*Magnolia* continues to reflect the wide-ranging interests of its membership, who are encouraged to submit articles on a variety of topics and time periods, from accounts of the private gardens of Southern women to the farming techniques of America’s first president. *Magnolia* was the first to publish an article by Richard Westmacott on his research of Southern vernacular gardens well before the publication of his groundbreaking 1992 book *African-American Gardens and Yards of the Rural South*. In addition to providing full accounts of the society’s annual meetings, the bulletin often documents other important conferences such as Old Salem’s biennial “Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes Conference” and the International Heritage Rose Conference held in Charleston, South Carolina in 2001. An index of *Magnolia* was produced in 1999 covering Volume 1, Number 1 through Volume XIV, Number 4 and bound sets of the first 56 issues are now available.

Return to the River: A Gala 20th Anniversary Event

Mary Palmer Dargan, ASLA and Staci Catron-Sullivan, Atlanta, Georgia

This year the Southern Garden History Society celebrated its 20th anniversary at its annual meeting held in Natchez, Mississippi, April 18-21. Natchez native Dr. Elizabeth Boggess organized the event with the assistance of Rose Godfrey, Anne MacNeil, and Traci Maier, and with Glenn Haltom, coordinator of the first Natchez meeting in 1984, as honorary chair. The event included a broad-range of activities and united nearly 200 garden history enthusiasts for a truly momentous weekend. From fascinating lectures on Natchez garden history and on the restoration of Eudora Welty’s garden in Jackson, Mississippi, to amazing tours of antebellum homes, plantations, historic and contemporary gardens, and an early 19th-century cemetery, the 20th anniversary was a great opportunity for members to reflect on the founding of this unique organization, on its vision, and on its vitality.

Natchez, Mississippi, with its history of trade routes and 18th-century homes and gracious southern hospitality, was the perfect city for the Southern Garden History Society conference. Suzanne Turner, acting Interim Director of the School of Landscape Architecture at Louisiana State University and former Board member of the Society, presented the opening lecture entitled “The Current of Culture, Horticulture and Garden Design in the Lower South.” Suzanne’s

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depth of perception, honed by three decades of teaching landscape history, was delivered in a highly accessible and friendly manner. Her discussion of the “why” behind gardening included: why did we choose to garden, what caused our antebellum French and European ancestors to convey the design, and why did these settlers choose the pattern. They had a mental image to convey to their families of the old ideas from France or England and, if very up to enlightened talks. Elizabeth Boggess, archeologist and conference host, described 300 years of Natchez gardens and toured with us through the historic city cemetery to admire the multitude of old roses still extant. Other conference lecturers gave participants a broader understanding of the centuries of gardening heritage in Natchez. Teri Tillman and Bee Byrnes on topics related to cemetery plantings, including the multitude of heirloom roses that were enjoyed by enthusiasts during the walking tours. Susan Haltom gave a wonderfully evocative and literary presentation on “Curtains of Green: Restoring the Welty Garden,” detailing the work underway to preserve the very personal garden of this renowned Southern writer. Mary W. (Mimi) Miller discussed “Natchez Landscapes & Gardens,” through travel accounts, diaries, old maps, legal surveys, drawings, and photographs. John Sykes’ “An Antebellum Vicksburg Garden” [see Magnolia, Vol. XVII, No. 3, Spring 2002 lead article] also relied on primary resource materials to re-create the story of Emmaline Harrison Balfour’s fascinating garden. Finally, Traci Maier’s “Fred’s Greenhouses: a Family Affair” introduced SGHS members to this 100 business, which was later part of the tours.

The meeting ended with a memorable “Gala Garden Evening at Elms Court.” This private antebellum home, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, has been maintained and preserved by the MacNeil family and is currently the residence of Anne MacNeil. [“Elms Court: the Evolution of a Natchez Garden,” Magnolia, Vol. XVII, No. 2, Winter 2001-2002, p. 14.] The festive occasion was enhanced by a jazz band and concluded with dancing under the stars. All in all, this well-orchestrated gathering provided the perfect tone to conclude the Southern Garden History Society’s second decade and to launch the organization into the 21st century with its 21st annual meeting, which takes place in Atlanta, Georgia in April 2003.

date, were well versed in the picturesque landscape movement from England. They had many sources of information, such as publications by A. J. Downing, regional almanacs, and Thomas Affleck’s “how to” manuals. By the 1830s the gardens were very sophisticated.

What motivated these antebellum settlers to create such gardens, knowing the unpredictability and extremes of climate in the South? The true force was the human factor, which by nature wants to impose a perfect, proper setting upon the landscape. So how do we interpret remnants of their acts today? This is a challenge across America and not unique to the South. Diligent research of archeology and preservation of remnants can recant a compelling tale of our forebears’ gardens.

On our two-day conference we enjoyed other...
Further SGHS Publications

In the spring of 1993, the society published an in-depth essay by Lucy Lawliss entitled Residential Work of the Olmsted Firm in Georgia, 1893-1937, which illuminated the story of Frederick Law Olmsted’s ambition that his firm might one day “get a footing at the South.” This inaugural publication of Magnolia Essays was produced as a handsomely designed booklet and, according to its editor Catherine Howett, was designed to represent “a significant beginning for what is hoped will be a valuable series.” It remains the board’s desire to continue with this first effort by inviting scholars of Southern landscape and garden history to contribute their work for consideration.

Shortly after the publication of the first Magnolia Essays, the board undertook a more ambitious project to reproduce Jacques-Felix Lelièvre’s Nouveau Jardinier de la Louisiane, or The New Louisiana Gardener, the first of only two books on Louisiana gardening written in the 19th century. Sally Kittredge Reeves, archivist of the New Orleans Notarial Archives, was commissioned to translate the work into English and her painstaking research inspired her to write a lengthy introduction giving the historical context and detailing the author’s life and reasons for compiling and publishing this work in Francophile New Orleans.

Shingo Dameron Manard of Covington, Louisiana, who originally inspired the project, provided continued support and encouragement throughout. Under the guidance and perseverence of publications committee chair William C. Welch, the translation was finally published as a hardcover book by Louisiana State University Press in 2001. Thanks to the society, sixteen color plates of city gardens from the New Orleans Notarial Archives were included in this award-winning volume.

Finally, the society has supported the publication of the proceedings from two of Old Salem’s “Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscape Conferences” as paperback books. Both books, The Influence of Women on the Southern Landscape (1995) and Breaking Ground: Examining the Vision and Practice of Historic Landscape Restoration (1997), are available through SGHS.

In Print


A Guide to the Wildflowers of South Carolina is geared to residents of the Palmetto State, however it deserves a wider readership. Many of the wildflowers of South Carolina show no respect for state boundaries and flourish throughout the Southeast, and a number, classed as ruderal plants at the end of the catalogue, are the naturalized introductions planted in the 19th and early 20th century that have become staple flowers in traditional Southern gardens. In addition, interesting and useful historical information is included with descriptions of such naturalized plants as china-berry (Melia azedarach) and princess tree (Paulownia tomentosa). Although relatively small in size, South Carolina hosts a remarkable variety of wildflower species. The authors have simplified the task of identification by grouping species according to habitat. Of added interest, the botanists share itineraries for more than fifty wildflower expeditions and short essays on a variety of topics, including carnivorous plants, Carolina bays, native orchids, medicinal plants and folk remedies, poisonous plants, edible plants, and the role of fire in natural communities.
Annual Meetings of the Southern Garden History Society

1983 Atlanta, Georgia, April 15-16 – Florence P. Griffin. Held at the Atlanta Historical Society’s McElreath Hall, with tours of the Tullie Smith House and Gardens; Swan House and Gardens; and the Cherokee Garden Library.

1984 Natchez, Mississippi, April 6-7 – Glenn L. Haltom. Included tours of Longwood House, Stanton Hall, Rosalie, Dunleith, Elms Court, and Historic Natchez.


1987 Charlottesville, Virginia (Monticello), June 12-14 – Peter Hatch, Peggy Cornett. Included tours of Monticello; the University of Virginia’s pavilion gardens; The Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants; Upper and Lower Bremo and the Recess at Bremo Plantation; and Montpelier (home of James Madison).


1989 Savannah, Georgia, May 12-14 – Mary Helen Ray. Included visits to Historic Liberty County; Midway Church, Cemetery and Museum; Leconte-Woodmanston Plantation Site; and Tea Grove Plantation.


1993 Brenham, Texas, April 16-18, “Texas Forever” – Bill and Diane Welch. Included visits to Bethlehem Lutheran Church and Cemetery; Round Top cemetery; Festival Hill; Lewis-Wagner Farmstead and the Winedale Historical Center; and the Antique Rose Emporium.


1999 Houston, Texas, “Expect the Unexpected: The Greener Side of Texas,” March 26-28 – Nancy Haywood, Linda Hughes, Susan Keetos, Jayme Ponder, Betty Schoolar, Bill and Diane Welch. Visits to Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens; Menil Collection; Museum of Fine Arts in Houston; Peckerwood Garden and Yucca Do Nursery; Margaret Shanks’ garden; and the Antique Rose Emporium.

2000 Mount Vernon, Virginia, May 5-7 – J. Dean Norton, Gail Griffin. Visits to George Washington Masonic Temple; Mount Vernon (with opera and hot air balloon rides); an excursion (with breakfast) down the Potomac River aboard the Cherry Blossom, an authentic paddle wheeler; River Farm and the American Horticultural Society; British Embassy gardens; Hillwood Museum; National Cathedral; and Dumbarton Oaks and Oak Hill Cemetery in Georgetown.

2001 New Bern, North Carolina (Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens), May 4-6, “Pocosin to Parterre: Landscapes of the Carolina Coastal Plain” – Perry Mathews, Carlton B. Wood. Included visits to Somerset Place, Hayes Plantation and a full day in historic Edenton; Tryon Palace and Gardens; Bellair Plantation; and the Croatan National Forest. Post conference trips to the Wilmington area to visit Airlie Gardens and Orton Plantation and a multi-day trip to the North Carolina Outer Banks.

2002 Natchez, Mississippi, April 18-21, “Return to the River: A Gala 20th Anniversary” – Dr. Elizabeth Boggess, Rose Godfrey, Anne MacNeil, Traci Maier (coordinators); Glenn Haltom (honorary chair). Visited Cottage Gardens, Natchez City Cemetery, Monmouth, Cherry Grove Plantation, Elgin Plantation, Melrose, Fred’s Greenhouses, and Elms Court. Optional trips to Vicksburg National Battlefield Park, Natchez Trace Parkway, Port Gibson, Washington (home of Thomas Affleck), and Stewart Orchids.
Portraying the Years

The following pages contain an assortment of images that will surely evoke memories of Southern Garden History Society gatherings over the past two decades. This pictorial retrospective of the gardens and landscapes, the individuals and groups of friends depicts our story better than words. Many thanks go to Dean Norton, Bill Welch, Mary Anne Pickens, Flora Ann Bynum, and Peggy Cornett for donating photographs, slides, and digital images from their personal collections.

Catherine Sims - Houston, Texas - 1999

Wildflower Meadow at Antique Rose Emporium - Brenham, Texas - 1999

Group at Dumbarton Oaks - 1990

SGHS Board Members: (L to R) Elizabeth Boggess, Jane Symmes, James Barganier, Ed Grisham, Nancy Haywood, Betsy Cruzel - Tallahassee, Florida - 1997
Bill Welch and Dr. Ruby Osborne at the British Embassy in Washington, DC, 2000

Shingo Manard, Louisiana 1991

Weej Broderson and Jayme Ponder, Tallahassee, Florida, 1997

Ben Page, Hugh Dargan and Todd Dickinson, Potomac River, 1990

Members walking along live oaks to Rosedown

“Virginia is for Lovers” - Mount Vernon 2000

Shingo Manard, Louisiana 1991

Afon Villa host with John Flowers, Bill Hunt, Ed Shull - Louisiana 1991
Goodwood Plantation hosts Wery Broderon and Linda M. Williams - Tallahassee, Florida - 1997

The Texas contingency listen to George Washington at Mount Vernon - 2000

Dean Norton, host of 1990 meeting, with wife Susanne and first daughter Penelope at Dumbarton Oaks.

Christy Snipes - Louisiana 1991

SGHS president Peter Hatch and Art Tucker in 2000

Crowfield in Charleston, South Carolina - 1992

Ken McFarland, Gail Griffin & Ed Shull on paddle wheeler “Cherry Blossom” heading to Mount Vernon. - 2000

Peggy Cornett St. Francisville, Louisiana 1991

The Texas contingency listen to George Washington at Mount Vernon - 2000
Legendary Southern Horticulturist William Lanier Hunt

By Flora Ann Bynum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Thanks to his extraordinary vision, the Southern Garden History Society owes its very existence to Bill Hunt. In 1979 at Old Salem’s first “Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes” conference (in Winston-Salem), he made an eloquent speech proclaiming the need to establish a garden history society in the South. He further urged that such an organization, modeled after the Garden History Society of England, needed to begin preserving old Southern gardens and plants immediately. At the second conference in 1980, Mr. Hunt repeated the plea. He made such a society sound so appealing that Old Salem’s business office began receiving inquiries from people who wanted to join.

John B. Flowers III, representing the Stagville Center of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources in Durham, and Flora Ann Bynum, representing Old Salem Inc., met with Bill Hunt three times to draw up bylaws and incorporation papers. In March 1982, with Bill signing the Articles of Incorporation as “initial registered agent,” the society was born officially. The society’s first board met in May of that year and named Bill Hunt honorary president. He served also as host to the society’s board meeting at his home in Chapel Hill in October 1984. SGHS’s first issue of Magnolia Essays, published in 1993, was dedicated to Bill Hunt for “his lifelong contributions to the appreciation of southern gardening and southern garden history.”

The North Carolina Botanical Garden gave a dinner honoring Bill Hunt the evening of October 18, on the occasion of the 30th-anniversary meeting of the Botanical Garden Foundation, Inc. He also became the third recipient of the Flora Caroliniana Award, joining the ranks of Lady Bird Johnson and naturalist John Terres. A booklet prepared for the meeting by Ken Moore, assistant director of the Botanical Garden, called Mr. Hunt the “Dean of Southern Horticulture.” The booklet’s introduction states: “In celebrating William Lanier Hunt’s life . . . we are celebrating his many, many contributions to the world of horticulture, his founding of the Botanical Garden Foundation, and his lifelong efforts to keep us all mindful of the heritage, not only of our natural world, but of the cultural life of our state and community during the twentieth century.”

Bill Hunt was born in 1906 in Pomona, North Carolina, on the outskirts of Greensboro and near his uncle’s 400-acre Lindley Nurseries, one of the South’s oldest and largest. There he played in the greenhouses and learned from the nursery staff, which included gardeners from Europe. He graduated from Woodberry Forest School in Virginia, and from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill in 1931, where he studied botany under the late Dr. W. C. Coker. He continued to live the rest of his life in Chapel Hill. A profile of Bill Hunt printed in The Chapel Hill News (October 18, 1996) described his lifetime of continually seeking information about Southern horticulture, noting: “In the decade after his 1931... graduation ... he referred to himself as ‘a wandering garden specialist,’ roaming from town to town consulting on park and beautification projects, lecturing and teaching garden short courses. Nurseries, private gardens and even cemeteries became his outdoor classrooms, and the first-hand knowledge he amassed was stored away for future use.”

During his college years he explored the rhododendron-covered bluffs called Laurel Hill along Morgan Creek east of Chapel Hill, and gradually began buying land. He was determined to preserve this magnificent natural landscape, and eventually gave the 125 acres, known as The William Lanier Hunt Arboretum, to the North Carolina Botanical Garden.

“Bill Hunt has been my link to Southern Garden heritage,” noted Linda Askey, SGHS member and former garden editor for Southern Living magazine. “He and his contemporaries, Elizabeth Lawrence and Caroline Dorman, gardened voraciously and wrote eloquently, setting a pace that challenges the most experienced gardeners with their diverse palette of plants while offering the simple understandings that beginners need.” In 1967, at his urging, the University of North Carolina Press reprinted Elizabeth Lawrence’s 1942 classic, A Southern Garden, for which Bill wrote the forward. In 1995 Bill Hunt was named an honorary member of the Garden Writers Association of America at its meeting in Texas. He was an active promoter.

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Flora Ann Bynum – The Heart and Soul of the Southern Garden History Society

By Peggy Cornett, editor

It would be impossible to reflect upon the Southern Garden History Society without including Flora Ann Bynum. Since the early 1970s, Flora Ann has worked determinedly to champion garden preservation and restoration, especially when the movement was in its infancy. A North Carolina native and graduate of Meredith College, she has been a longtime resident of Old Salem, a restored historic Moravian village in Winston-Salem, where she, along with her late husband Zack, raised their son and three daughters. When it was determined that the restoration of Old Salem would never be complete without researching and restoring the gardens and landscapes of early Salem, she took the lead and chaired the first Landscape Restoration Committee. In this capacity, Flora Ann flourished and found her true calling. She set up an office in her home and began to assemble information from Moravian records and other sources throughout the United States and Europe. This she did as a volunteer, at her own expense, and with Zack's full and unconditional support.

In 1988, Flora Ann received the first Minnette C. Duffy Award in landscape preservation from the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina. This Foundation has built a national reputation with its many successes in preserving the state's historic buildings, and its prestigious awards recognize the accomplishments of North Carolina's leaders in the field of preservation. Flora Ann also was the recipient of Old Salem's Frederick William Marshall Society Distinguished Service Award in appreciation for her vision of what landscape restoration should be and her hard work in bringing it to reality.

Ken McFarland, immediate past president of SGHS and long associate and friend of Flora Ann, acknowledged her many accomplishments in an article for the winter 1988 issue of Magnolia in which he wrote:

Since the early 1970s, Flora Ann has devoted enormous energy to [the Old Salem landscape] program and … has become a nationally recognized authority on garden history. Few visitors to Old Salem today, garden experts or not, can depart unimpressed by the accomplishments of Flora Ann and her colleagues in restoring and interpreting the landscape of the Moravian town.

A tireless and exacting researcher, Flora Ann has applied her knowledge not only directly to the Old Salem grounds and gardens but also to the preparation of an impressive body of publications…. A preservationist and scholar of extraordinary talent, Flora Ann is no less gifted as an organizer. In 1979 she played a key role in founding Old Salem's conference on ‘Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes,” a biennial event, which receives ever-increasing regional and national attention. Readers of Magnolia will know too that she was tireless in the efforts that led to the founding of the Southern Garden History Society in 1982, and that her energies have sustained it since that time.

Flora Ann has authored several guides on the Salem landscape and articles on Moravian gardens and gardeners published in Old Salem’s Three Forks of Muddy Creek journals. She was the driving force behind the publication of proceedings for two of Old Salem’s Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes Conferences: The Influence of Women of the Southern Landscape (1995) and Breaking Ground: Examining the Vision and Practice of Historic Landscape Restoration (1997). In 1990 Flora Ann started what she hoped would be an occasional column for Magnolia called “The Plant Reporter,” in which she explored the identity of Southern heirlooms through research, interviews, and oral history. These articles, while providing solid historical information on plants, were written in the accessible style of North Carolina garden writer Elizabeth Lawrence’s market bulletins and correspondence from the

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1950s-70s. Although Flora Ann’s legendary plant reporter persona has not surfaced since 1995, undoubtedly ideas for many more articles are stored in her files and ready to resume at any moment. Above all, Flora Ann enjoys keeping abreast of the latest research and findings in the field. Maintaining an active correspondence with the country’s horticultural leaders is of utmost importance, even if it means entering cyberspace. Despite her self-effacing manner, Flora Ann quickly mastered the nuances of the Internet and now contributes regularly to the “Heirloom Flowers” forum moderated by Scott Kunst of Old House Gardens.

Flora Ann knows how to make things work and is renowned for taking lofty, seemingly impossible ideas and methodically turning them into reality. Although a traditional Southern lady in the best sense, she likewise is the embodiment of a modern woman with all the drive of a CEO. As secretary-treasurer of SGHS since 1984, she has kept the board on course and, throughout her tenure, has been the seamless connection, carrying a multitude of projects through to completion. Dean Norton, head horticulturist at Mount Vernon, recalls his experience working with her as he organized two separate annual meetings of the society. “As a former host [in 1990 and 2000] I can honestly say that annual meetings take on a life of their own once they begin and the best thing to do is to grab your surfboard and catch the wave. Flora Ann knows the importance of these meetings and is right there with you the whole way. During the intense months of planning she will be concerned, bothered, tense, and frustrated while remaining amazingly calm and reassuring and always a delight. Flora Ann is simply Flora Ann, steady and never changing.”

Although never a paid professional herself, Flora Ann has inspired many to pursue careers in horticulture and garden history. I say this from personal experience, for my first job after graduating from college was as a gardener at Old Salem. I arrived in the early days of Old Salem’s garden restoration program and Flora Ann immediately took me under her wing. She has played a significant role in my career ever since.

Texas member and former SGHS president Bill Welch, who also worked with Flora Ann on two annual meetings, sums up her qualities best by saying:

Flora Ann truly is the heart and soul of the society. She has graciously provided guidance and inspiration for our favorite organization while always supplying fresh ideas and suggestions. In doing this Flora Ann has been inspirational in bringing focus to the many and varied facets of our Southern gardening heritage. Exploring our garden history has become more of a mainstream activity for a broadening group of people who realize that the gardens of our past have major relevance for us today. Flora Ann continues to be our guiding light and inspiration. She continues to be a “hands on” gardener always willing to share information and ideas with other gardeners of all ages.

“The Plant Reporter” articles:
“Searching for Pink Roman Hyacinths.” v. 7, n. 1, p. 9, Summer 1990
“White Pipes and Silver Bells Ring in the Spring.” v. 11, n. 3, p. 13, Spring 1995

Zack and Flora Ann Bynum

photo by Greg Grant
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Legendary Southern Horticulturist William Lanier Hunt

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of the garden club movement begun in the 1920s and he lectured to club members in fifteen states while still a very young man.

He served overseas during World War II where his ability to speak and read French and German enabled him to work with the Belgian underground and the strategic bombing survey. He was one of the first American Fellows of the Royal Horticultural Society (F.R.H.S.) and had many contacts in England through visits there.

In the 1960s he worked with University of North Carolina trustees and others to develop the North Carolina Botanical Garden, which opened in 1966. He organized the Botanical Garden Foundation, Inc. and served as its first president. Bill Hunt was instrumental also in establishing the renowned Landscape Gardening School at Sandhills Community College in Southern Pines, North Carolina.

In 1982, Duke University Press published Mr. Hunt’s Southern Gardens, Southern Gardening. The book's jacket states:

“William Lanier Hunt is the leading authority writing today on southern gardens. His historical knowledge, deep appreciation of gardening in all its aspects, and firsthand experience of the entire South, makes this collection of his best writings a valuable and practical source for every southern gardener. Hunt encourages his readers to move beyond the stereotyped gardens of dime store seed flats and instructs gardeners in the finer points of growing and finding native plants, flowers and trees. He recalls what our grandmothers and great-grandmothers grew, and exhorts his readers to look up from the spade to become aware of the overall design of their gardens, of color schemes, and of how to plan beyond azaleas and daylilies.”

Linda Askey aptly describes him as the essential grand gentleman of the garden who still managed to retain “the spark of enthusiasm that keeps him ever young and ever dear to countless gardeners he has influenced.”

Bill Hunt died in 1996, but his legacy continues to this day. A story in the May-June 2002 issue of the North Carolina Botanical Garden Newsletter states that the garden has recently received gifts of cash, land, and stock from Mr. Hunt’s estate, which will be used to support the care of the part of the garden known as the William Lanier Hunt Arboretum. The newsletter says: “Those of us who knew Bill Hunt miss his effervescent spirit and his animated stories...We continue to marvel at his horticultural legacy and his provision for the beautiful rhododendrons he loved as a young man, rescued from destruction, and left as a gift for future generations of botanists and wildflower lovers.”

[Updated from an article originally published in Magnolia, Vol. XII, No. 4; Fall 1996, “Legendary Southern Horticulturist William Lanier Hunt Dies.”]

The Garden History Society of Great Britain – A Model for the Future

SGHS members, especially those with Internet access, may want to explore garden history internationally through an organization that is celebrating its 30th anniversary. Headquartered in London, this Garden History Society concentrates its efforts on England, Wales, and Scotland, but has many contacts in other countries and maintains an international interest. The main aims of the society are: To promote the study of the history of gardening, landscape gardening and horticulture in all aspects, to promote the protection and conservation of historic parks, gardens, and designed landscapes, and to advise on their restoration. The Garden History Society is widely recognized for its expertise and advice. The government has designated the society as a body that must be consulted by local authorities on all planning applications affecting historic parks and gardens on the English Heritage Register. The society, which is a registered charity, works through an elected council and committees. Professionally qualified conservation officers advise on individual garden restoration and protection cases, and help develop conservation strategies generally. The Garden History Society publishes a professional journal, a regular members newsletter, and a wide range of leaflets and specialist publications. There is a full program of garden tours, in the UK and overseas lectures, seminars, and workshops specially organized for members.

According to Anne Hardcastle, fundraising chair for the society’s branch in Scotland, “The most interesting aspects of the society’s work for you in America would be the research and publications that the society produces. The Website carries full indices and related bibliographies to most of the material it has published. In addition to the Journal, which publishes contemporary research, the Newsletter, produced three to four times annually, is full of fascinating information, reports and reviews. In addition, there is a new forum for researchers where you can exchange information or ask questions.”

The Web address is: www.gardenhistorysociety.org. The head office is at: 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1 M 6EJ. The Garden History Society in Scotland is based at The Glistite Meeting House, 33 Barony Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6NX.

During the winter of 1957-1958 Katharine S. White wrote the first of a series of essays that represented a new literary genre when “Onward and Upward in the Garden” was published in The New Yorker on March 1, 1958. Having long held an appreciation for the language of garden catalogues, at least since 1926 when her light-hearted verse, “Seductive Spring Seed Catalogue,” appeared in the magazine, Katharine White reviewed the season’s bounty of nursery and plant catalogues. As both a seasoned gardener and a literary editor, she appraised the writings and the horticultural offerings of leading plantsmen of the day, H. M. Russell of Russell Gardens in Texas, “Amos Pettingill” of White Flower Farm, and Will Tillotson of Will Tillotson’s Roses, while giving notice to the largely anonymous, more numerous writers who crafted plant descriptions for Jackson & Perkins, Bobbink & Atkins, Wayside Gardens, W. Atlee Burpee, and other mail-order companies. Katharine White’s now landmark article garnered wide appreciation, but none, we have come to learn, more flattering than that of our own Elizabeth Lawrence.

Two months later, following a belated reading of the review, Elizabeth Lawrence wrote to Katharine White conveying her esteem. She also shared notes on her own particular favorites in the nursery catalogue trade, a list that included at its head “Park’s Flower Book” issued by Geo. W. Park Seed Company, Greenwood, South Carolina. Thus began a correspondence between two important gardeners and published garden writers that continued up to June 11, 1977, a few weeks before Katharine White’s death on July 20, when she wrote her last letter to “Dear Elizabeth.” By coincidence Elizabeth Lawrence would die eight years later, on that exact day, and be buried in the foreign soil of Lothian, Maryland, far from Raleigh and Charlotte, North Carolina, where she had lived and gardened for much of her life.

Members of the Southern Garden History Society need no introduction to Elizabeth Lawrence, whose A Southern Garden became a classic of American garden writing on its publication in 1942. That book, together with The Little Bulbs: A Tale of Two Gardens (1957), Gardens in Winter (1961), and three published after her death, Gardening for Love: The Market Bulletins (1987), Through the Garden Gate (1990), and A Rock Garden in the South (1990), edited respectively by Allen Lacy, Bill Neal, and Nancy Goodwin and Allen Lacy, is on our shelves. The same can be said for Onward and Upward in the Garden, the collection of Katharine White’s New Yorker articles that E. B. White assembled and published in 1979. But what can be said anew here is that Two Gardeners reintroduces us to two figures, old friends of the sort that favored writers become, for whom gardening and writing were equal passions. The letters exchanged between the two, one a married woman at the center of the New York literary scene with a summer garden in Maine and a winter home in Florida, and Miss Lawrence, an unmarried Southern lady who lived in Charlotte, gardened, wrote, and cared for her aged mother, are appealing and engaging, combining personal anecdote with astute horticultural observations and advice, leavening professional opinion with a gentle but

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Book Review

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spirited humanity.
A slight deference, which marks much Southern correspondence, is apparent in the early letters Elizabeth Lawrence sends North to her new friend; while published herself, she is still in awe of Katharine S. White and those published in The New Yorker and in New York. But once a friendly, conversational footing is established, Elizabeth Lawrence blooms as a correspondent, sharing her life, views, and experience in simple yet elegantly composed letters. With the possibility of appearing to be sentimental, one must say Elizabeth Lawrence wrote a very good old-style letter; alas, one that has become “old fashioned” now in the days of e-mail communication. They were letters that one looked forward to receiving, enjoyed reading, and often reread with pleasure. As the friendship and exchange advance, the balance shifts, and Elizabeth Lawrence takes on the natural role of garden mentor, dispensing advice, observations, and a wealth of experience, her own and that she has gained from market bulletins, to her older friend. Much of it soon finds its way into the columns of “Onward and Upward in the Garden.” As the writers age, the exchange nears its end, and complaints about health and illness figure more frequently, we regret the coming loss of these voices. And we wish they had put pen to paper to each other much earlier.

Today, seven of Elizabeth Lawrence’s books and collected writings are in print. Beacon Press, the publisher of Two Gardens, has reissued Onward and Upward in the Garden in paperback form as a companion volume to the collected letters of Katharine S. White and Elizabeth Lawrence edited by Emily Herring Wilson.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Proposals for articles are now being accepted for Volume 11 (2003) of the Journal of the New England Garden History Society. Subjects are not restricted to New England and can include all facets of the field of North American landscape history, including gardens and parks, horticulture, literature, individual landscape architects and garden designers, preservation, or any interdisciplinary topic.

Proposals should be one page (no more than 250 words) and include a list of suggested illustrations and a brief author biography. Proposals are due October 31, 2002. Send to Editor, NEGHS, Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 900 Washington Street, Wellesley, MA 02482 or send as a Word attachment to: jbbr@mindspring.com.

Of Note

Judith B. Tankard, founding editor of the Journal of the New England Garden History Society, will retire from the editorship at the end of this year to pursue some long-overdue research and writing projects. Jane Roy Brown, a graduate of the Landscape Design Program at Radcliffe Seminars and co-editor of AMC Outdoors, a monthly publication of the Appalachian Mountain Club, has been appointed the new editor.

The New England Garden History Society was founded in 1990 as a program of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Its mission, much like that of the Southern Garden History Society, is the encouragement and distribution of information and research on regional garden history. NEGHS sponsors lectures, symposia, and publications.

The Journal, an 80-page annual publication, was launched in 1991 to great critical acclaim. The year 2002 marks the tenth issue of the Journal. Over the years the Journal has evolved from a New England focus to one of broader scope to include the East Coast, the South, the Midwest, and Canada. Recent articles pertaining to the South, for instance, include “The View from Montpelier” by Donna C. Dodenhoff and “The Correspondence of Elizabeth Lawrence and Caroline Dormon,” by Karen Cole. Many SGHS members have contributed to the Journal, including Davyd Foard Hood, who wrote a review of Gardens and Gardening in the Chesapeake by Barbara Wells Sarudy (Volume 7/1999), May Brawley Hill, Virginia Lopez Begg, Lake Douglas, Allyson M. Hayward, Sally Lieberman, Elizabeth McLean, Susan Turner, and Sally Williams. Visit www.masshort.org/NEGHS.htm for the contents of back issues. Typically each issue includes approximately five scholarly articles and twenty book reviews, all written by experts in the field. Proposals for articles are always welcome from members of the Southern Garden History Society.
The New Louisiana Gardener - Nouveau Jardinier de la Louisiane, 1838 publication by Jacques-Félix Lelièvre and translated into English by Sally Kirttredge Reeves. Published by LSU Press in cooperation with SGHS. Hardcover, 186 pages with color photographs and half-tones. Specially priced for SGHS members at $25 (plus $3.95 postage). NC orders add 6.5% sales tax.


Individual Back Issues of Magnolia: $5 each, including postage and tax.


SPECIAL OFFER: If purchasing both Breaking Ground and The Influence of Women, the total cost for the two volumes is $15 (plus $3.95 postage). NC orders add 6.5% sales tax.

Send orders to: Kay Bergey, publications secretary, SGHS, c/o Old Salem, Inc., Drawer F, Salem Station, Winston-Salem, NC 27108.

NOTE: Checks payable to SGHS for Nouveau Jardinier and Magnolias. Checks payable to Old Salem, Inc. for Breaking Ground and The Influence of Women. For information call (336) 721-7378 or e-mail: bergeymk@wfu.edu

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The membership year runs from May 1 to April 30. Members joining after January 1 will be credited for the coming year beginning May 1. Write to membership secretary at: Southern Garden History Society, Old Salem, Inc., Drawer F, Salem Station, Winston–Salem, North Carolina 27108 phone (336) 721–7328 www.southerngardenhistory.org

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