



Magnolia

Magnolia grandiflora
The Laurel Tree of Carolina
Catesby's Natural History, 1743

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Gardening with Bulbs: Mountain Shoals, 1838 to the Present

By Sara Van Beck, Atlanta, Georgia

The up-country South Carolina garden of Mountain Shoals and its daughter-garden at Williamston were featured in Ann Leighton's third work, *American Gardens of the Nineteenth Century "For Comfort and Affluence."* In the interest of space, readers are referred to her work.¹ Her book, however, does not examine the layers of the garden's plants. I have concluded that the garden evidences three to four styles of bulb plantings, which coupled with the bulbs employed, hint at the gardener responsible and timeframe of planting.

Special thanks to the current owners Martin Meek, AIA, and Bill Cooper for their collection of photographs and oral interviews with the relations and friends of former owners. The Garden Club of South Carolina's "Follow the Blooms Garden Tour" visits Mountain Shoals May 20. (see Calendar, page 2)

General timeline

In 1836, James Nesbitt, Jr., purchased the property of Mountain Shoals, at Enoree, South Carolina, and by 1838 built a house for his family. His wife Narcissa Bird Nesbitt died in 1839, after the delivery of her sixth child, Nancy Narcissa. James remarried, to Caroline Brewton, in 1843; Caroline, too, had six children—the first being a girl, Frances. James and Caroline were from local Irish families from the County Down. The house's construction reflects Irish traditions, and the pleasure garden is a bold statement of Irish love and spousal commitment.

By 1870, James and Caroline's daughter Frances and her husband William A. McClintock were residing at Mountain Shoals, until William moved his family to a new house about 1875.² In 1878, Caroline sold the property to James Laurens Hill. Fortuitously, photographs taken c. 1900 of the Hill family gathered in the garden



Front of Mountain Shoals showing Eternity Circle, 1976.

Photo courtesy M. Meek and B. Cooper

survive. The Hill family sold the house in 1924 to Dr. W. H. Irby and his actress wife, Josephine Biddleman. Mrs. Irby remained in the house until her death in 1973; it does not appear she was much of a gardener. The current owners, Martin Meek and Bill Cooper, took possession in 1975.

The current plantings

Mountain Shoals is a busy and complicated garden rising upslope from the old road. There are three garden spaces enclosed by the original fencing: the front two

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CALENDAR

Please visit www.southerngardenhistory.org for more detailed descriptions of these events.

February 18, 2011. Southern Garden Heritage Conference, State Botanical Garden of Georgia, Athens, with presentations by Alfie Vick, Chris Hastings, Marcia Bansley, Bill Mann, Eric MacDonald, Sara Henderson, and Staci Catron (with updates on the Georgia Historic Landscape Initiative). Contact Anne Shenk at (706) 542-6158 or visit: <http://uga.edu/botgarden>

February 25-27, 2011. Southeastern Flower Show, "In Tune with Blooms: A Prelude to 25 Years of the Flower Show." Cobb Galleria Center, Atlanta, GA. Speakers include Vince Dooley, Walter Reeves, P. Allen Smith, Allan Armitage, and Erica Glasener. Visit: www.sehort.org/flower_show.

February 26, 2011. "A Passion for Plants," JC Raulston Arboretum Half-Day Symposium at NC State University in Raleigh, NC. The mini symposium will feature three horticultural heavy-weights: Dan Hinkley, Todd Lasseigne, and Tony Avent. Visit: www.ncsu.edu/jcraulstonarboretum or contact Chris Glenn at (919) 513-7005, chris_glenn@ncsu.edu.

March 1, 2011. 27th Davidson Horticultural Symposium, "Exploring Possibilities: Rediscovering Home" hosted by Davidson College, Davidson, NC. Symposium honors the past while exploring new frontiers in plants and design. Speakers include Chip Calloway, Darrel Morrison, Erica Glasener, David Creech, and Barbara Pleasant. Contact: Mary Wilson Stewart, mwwstewart@bellsouth.net; (704) 604-6618.

March 25-26, 2011. "Ready, Set ... Bloom!" Fourth annual garden symposium, presented by Old City Cemetery, Lynchburg, VA. Speakers are: Cherie Foster Colburn (author of *Heirloom Bulbs for Today*), heirloom rose specialist Rev. Douglas Seidel, and Peggy Singlemann (Maymont Gardens). Contact Dawn Fields Wise, (434) 847-1465, dawn@grevgarden.org; or visit: www.lynchburgtickets.com/gardensymposium.

March 27, 2011. 8th Annual Winter Garden Symposium & Workshop at Goodwood Museum and Gardens in Tallahassee, FL. Featured speakers: UGA assoc. professor Dr. Tim Smalley, on *Timeless Lessons from Edinburgh* and the legendary Vince Dooley on his new book *Vince Dooley's Garden—The Horticultural Journey of a Football Coach*. Contact Goodwood's Director of Horticulture, Mike Herrin, (850) 877-7592; www.goodwoodmuseum.org.

April 1-3, 2011. 29th Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society, "River Capitol: Bridging Landscapes of the Old and New South," in Baton Rouge, LA. Meeting offers a variety of public and private gardens reflecting Anglo and Franco traditions. Sunday's optional tour features private gardens in nearby Pointe Coupee Parish. Registration brochures are mailed. Visit: www.southerngardenhistory.org.

April 6-9, 2011. Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation Annual Meeting in Fort Worth, TX. Tours feature the Philip Johnson's Fort Worth Water Gardens, Lawrence Halprin's Heritage Park, Hare and Hare's municipal rose garden (Fort Worth Botanic Garden), and historic sites on the Paluxy River in Hood and Somervell counties, including the town of Glen Rose and Dinosaur Valley State Park. Visit: www.ahlp.org.

April 10-11, 2011. Colonial Williamsburg 65th Annual Garden Symposium. "Timeless Ideas for Today's Gardens," cosponsored by the American Horticultural Society. Notable speakers include Joe Lamp'l, executive producer and host of *Growing a Greener World*; Roxanne Nersesian Paul of the National Wildlife Federation; Doug Tallamy, Ph.D., professor, Univ. of DE; Paul W. Meyer, the F. Otto Haas Director, Morris Arboretum, Univ. of PA; and authors Stephanie Cohen and Suzy Bale. Visit: www.history.org; or call (800) 603-0948.

April 17, 2011. The Old Village "Home Garden & Art Tour," in Mt. Pleasant, SC. The event benefits the American Red Cross. Purchase tickets: www.lowcountryredcross.org or contact Roberta Freer, freer@usa.redcross.org; (843) 764-2323 x 386.

April 16-23, 2011. Historic Garden Week in Virginia, sponsored by The Garden Club of Virginia, benefiting the restoration of important historic properties in Virginia. Many historic James River plantations and Tuckahoe Plantation, a boyhood home of Thomas Jefferson, will be open. Information is available in the *Historic Garden Week in Virginia* guidebook. Visit: www.vagardenweek.org or call (804) 644-7776.

April 18, 2011. "An Evening with Andrea Wulf," at Monticello. Celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Garden Club of Virginia's restoration of the Monticello flower garden at this elegant garden party on the West Lawn with informal tours of Monticello and the flower gardens. Ms. Wulf will discuss her newly released book *Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation*. Reserved tickets required. Visit: www.monticello.org or call (434) 984-9880.

April 21, 2011. Andrea Wulf, McElreath Hall, Atlanta History Center. Award winning author Andrew Wulf, speaking on her latest book *Founding Gardeners....* Event benefits the Historic Landscape and Garden Grant Fund of the Garden Club of Georgia and is supported by the Cherokee Garden Library. Contact: Lee Dunn at lee@dunnshouse.com or (770) 394-2834.

May 14-22, 2011. Follow the Blooms Garden Tour, sponsored by the Garden Club of SC. Gardens in the Charleston area, Camden, Columbia, North Augusta, Marion, Greenville, and Simpsonville will be open on specified days. Visit: www.gardenclubofsc.org; or email followtheblooms@gmail.com.

June 12-24, 2011. 15th Annual Historic Landscape Institute, "Preserving Jefferson's Gardens and Landscapes." This two-week course uses the gardens and landscapes of Monticello and UVA as an outdoor classroom. Lectures, workshops, field trips, and practical working experiences introduce the fields of landscape history, garden restoration, and historical horticulture. Applications due April 18; tuition fee charged. Call: (434) 984-9836, or visit: www.monticello.org.

September 17, 2011. Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello. Co-sponsored with the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, the fifth annual Heritage Harvest Festival held on the grounds of Monticello, showcasing Thomas Jefferson's gardens and featuring the wealth of Monticello's interpretation programs in not just gardening, but natural history, foodways, and the plantation community. Visit: www.HeritageHarvestFestival.com.

September 22-24, 2011. Biennial Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes: See bottom of page 11

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garden rooms with pattern beds partially bordered by box; the east side pattern beds; and the back garden. Daffodils also appear outside the fence near outbuildings and expanded garden areas. The gardens are terraced; beds, lined with granite flagstone set on end, also serve as retaining walls. The steep back garden is terraced, with narrow terraces originally serving as flower beds and wide ones as walking paths.

In the back garden on the western side, the middle terraces are awash in double daffodils—‘Sulphur Phoenix’ (an old pale yellow double) and ‘Telamonius Plenus’ (aka “Van Sion”—planted in both garden and walkway terraces.

Outside of the fence, 'Telamonius Plenus' are planted along the north foundation wall for the dairy and the office cabin. In the front of the house, along the drive, are small clumps of *Narcissus × odorus* (Campernelle jonquils) spotted about.

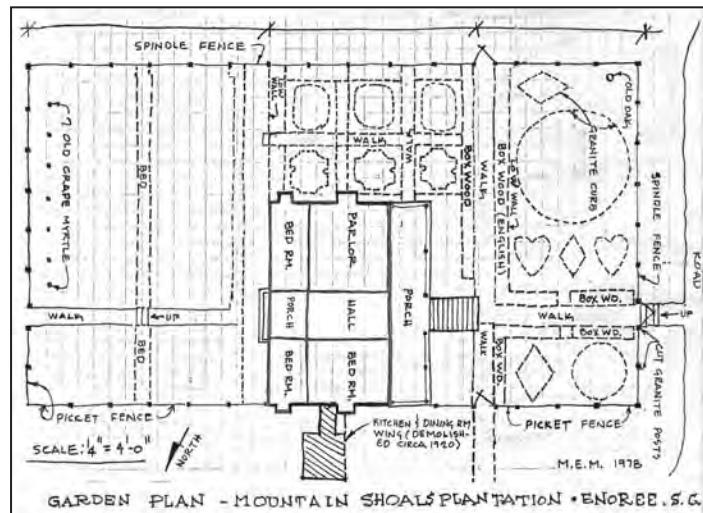
The front garden rooms are very unequal in size. The smaller room contains two pattern beds, a diamond upslope from a circle. The diamond contains the remnants of a double row of daffodils and a lone 'Telamonius Plenus'. The lower circle contains three concentric rings of alternating *Leucojum aestivum* (summer snowflake), *N. pseudonarcissus* (the willowy trumpet) and 'Telamonius Plenus'. Along both sides of the front fence are 'Telamonius Plenus', 'Sulphur Phoenix' and *Lycoris radiata* (spider lily, red spider lily, September lily, August lily).

The larger garden room contains five pattern beds. The hearts and middle diamond contain only a handful of bulbs (*Lycoris radiata*, *N. × odorus* and dwindled daffodils) in alternating rows. The large circular bed contains the dwindled remains of five concentric rows of bulbs, placed approximately one foot apart. The outermost ring is daffodils, the next two rows are *Lycoris*, the fourth row is *N. × odorus* and the innermost row is *Lycoris*. The far diamond contains an outer row of *Leucojum aestivum* around a severely dwindled cruciform pattern of daffodils (possibly *N. pseudonarcissus*).

The side pattern garden clearly shows additions of bulbs over the years due to the presence of Victorian hybrid daffodils. Also, much of the original outer walkways have been planted with bulbs.

The lowest pair of beds, *N. jonquilla* (the small fragrant jonquil sometimes called “sweeties”) has self-seeded across the outer/southern bed. The oval contains *N. jonquilla*, two daffodils, and *N. × odorosa* in the center. The bed outside the oval contains *N. × odorosa*, unidentified daffodils, and a few feather hyacinths (*Muscari comosum* ‘Plumosum’). In the walkway, along the fence, is a thick planting of the daffodil ‘Sir Watkin’.

The northern bed and walkway, against the house,



“Garden Plan of Mountain Shoals Plantation,” sketched by current owner, Martin Meek, AIA.

contains numerous bulbs. The bed is primarily *N. × odorus*, but also present are the bicolor daffodil 'Stella', 'Sulphur Phoenix', byzantine gladiolus, *N. × medioluteus* (common name "Twin Sisters") and *Lycoris radiata*. No remnant plumed hyacinths were observed. (The current owner remembers the beds' plantings being reversed as matching pairs in the planting scheme – so feather hyacinths inside one bed and then matching outside the next.)

The center pair of beds is simply planted. The entire southern oval bed is covered in seeded *N. jonquilla*; inside the oval is the remnant of a ring of feather hyacinths. Along the fence is thick planted with *Lycoris radiata*. The pattern bed against the house is also covered in self-seeded *N. jonquilla*. The inner bed contains *N. x odorus* and a few *N. x medioluteus*.

The upper pair of beds is heavily planted. In the southern bed is a clump of Victorian-era white daffodils, which are not conclusively identified. In the center oval are 'Sulphur Phoenix', 'Stella', and *N. × medioluteus*; outside the oval are 'Sulphur Phoenix' and *Lycoris*. In the walkway along the back terracing wall is *Lycoris radiata*, 'Stella', *N. × odorus* and 'Sulphur Phoenix'; along the fence is more *Lycoris*. The bed against the house is sparsely planted. Inside the pattern is *N. × medioluteus*; outside the pattern are 'Sulphur Phoenix' and *N. × medioluteus*. The walkway above the bed is heavily planted in *Lycoris radiata*.

The Bulbs

The cultivation histories of the bulbs themselves provide clues as to dates of original plantings. *Lycoris radiata* appears in southern gardens considerably more than it was carried in catalogs. Although carried by Jessamine Gardens of central Florida in 1898,³ it was not

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offered by Hastings of Interlachen in north-central Florida from 1889 to 1894.⁴ Meehan observed in 1894 that it was not as common in gardens as it was a quarter of a century before.⁵ Conversely, Edward Rand in 1884 commented, “*N. japonica* is a new species from Japan.⁶ The truss is very large and the flowers bright crimson.” William Robinson in England commented in 1903, “A second species, *L. radiata*, used to be sent to this country from Japan in very large quantities under the name of *Nerine japonica* ... but they realized so little that for the last two or three seasons I have not seen any.”⁷

The summer snowflake, *Leucojum aestivum*, and Byzantine gladiolus (*G. communis* var. *byzantinus*), have long been southern standby bulbs, dating back to Louis LeConte’s bulb botanic garden (at Woodmanston, southwest of Savannah) listing of 1813-1815. The Byzantine gladiolus was still sold by B. K. Bliss & Sons in their autumn 1880-1881 catalog. Feather hyacinths (*Muscari comosum* ‘Plumosum’) were sold by Bernard McMahon (as “Monstrous Hyacinth—*Muscari monstrosum*”) from 1804⁸ onwards, and as late as 1909 by J. M. Thorburn.⁹

The traditional heirloom daffodils have been planted in southern gardens at least since the early 1800s. *N. jonquilla*, *N. × odorus*, *N. × medioluteus*, and *N. pseudonarcissus* were sold by Bernard McMahon since 1804; ‘Sulphur Phoenix’ and two strains of species paperwhites were recorded in LeConte’s Woodmanston garden;¹⁰ and ‘Telamonius Plenus’ was sold by the William Prince Nursery of Long Island, New York, in 1822.¹¹ Two Victorian bicolor daffodils make strong appearances in the garden. ‘Sir Watkin’ appeared in catalogs by 1888 and remained popular into the 1930s.¹² ‘Stella’ was extremely popular in the 1890s through about 1920.¹³



1970s photograph of front garden from porch.

Caroline Brewton Nesbitt

Caroline Nesbitt could very likely have been familiar with the Irish folk iconography represented by the granite-outlined forms in the front bed—a heart for love, a diamond for success, and a circle for eternity. Two hearts joined by a diamond—the successful union of two loves. The patterned beds on the side are speculated to be “feminine” (Martin Meek, personal communication).

In keeping with the style of the period, Caroline most likely planted her bulbs within formal beds, maintaining a strict formality between cultivars. Also traditional for the region was maintaining a swept yard; this worked well with a bulb garden. After the senescence of the bulbs, the patterns of the beds served as the primary ornamentation viewed from the porch.

Rock-lined flower beds were an upper piedmont regional style implemented from the 1840s onward. Other examples include the John C. Zimmerman House, c. 1854, in nearby Glenn Springs. Stone-lined beds were installed at the Tullie Smith House gardens at the Atlanta History Center, researched and interpreted to the 1840s to 1860s.

During the Hill family occupancy (1878-1924) the garden changed little except for the introduction of a tall, thick ornamental grass, which appears in photographs dating to 1900, and which likely choked out many of the bulb plantings. Mrs. Irby, who did employ a yardman, is not thought to have planted any bulbs on the property.

The Williamston Garden of Nancy Narcissa Nesbitt Anderson

In 1956, Andrena Anderson Parker, daughter of Nancy Narcissa Nesbitt Anderson, penned a letter describing her mother’s lost garden at Williamston. George W. Anderson and Nancy moved to nearby Williamston in 1868. Thus, Frances at Mountain Shoals had at upwards of seven years to garden with her older step-sister Nancy, exchanging plants and ideas.



1956 photograph showing Della Burk Biddleman on the front porch.

Photo courtesy M. Meek and B. Cooper

Photo courtesy M. Meek and B. Cooper

Nancy's garden was created to remind her of her mother's garden at Mountain Shoals, particularly in the box walk to the front steps. However, the side beds of bulbs lined with rock also hearken back to Caroline's pattern beds of bulbs. Also of note, Nancy planted *Leucojum aestivum* and *Lycoris radiata*: "The little beds beside the steps were too shaded for most things.... I marked the August lilies at the foot of the steps." (p.7).^{1,14} It is speculated here that, since Nancy was born shortly before her mother Narcissa's death, the Mountain Shoals garden of her youth belonged to the mother she knew, Caroline.

Since 1979, the current owner, Martin Meek, has planted Sherwood Red azaleas, a holly tree, and a crepe myrtle. In the side pattern beds he added heavenly bamboo, *Nandina domestica*, around the air-conditioning unit, modern daffodils, and a red fig tree.

Peeling the layers

The front garden pattern beds reflect two different planting styles—a post-bellum ribbon pattern of alternating bulbs kept within the granite bed borders, and a later Victorian scatter or drift planting paying no mind to the dichotomy of planting bed to walking path and ignoring the garden fence line.

The 'Telamonius Plenus' planted outside the pattern bed and continuing outside the fence in a drift pattern, is strongly a Victorian landscape element. Its presence along outbuildings is further grist for the suspicion mill—bulbs as a foundation planting are a late to post-Victorian landscape feature. In the back, both 'Telamonius Plenus' and 'Sulphur Phoenix' are planted as to suggest a more 'wild garden' approach. Thus, it is quite likely a Hill gardener added the drifts of doubles across the property. The selection of flowers in the front garden rooms, as well as the ribbon-style planting patterns, both suggest post-bellum timeframes.

The *Leucojum* and *Lycoris* are posited to be later additions. The pattern of alternating bulbs—particularly in the large "eternity" bed—incorporating both bulbs,



Front of house during the early Irby period, 1924-1973

strongly suggests a post-bellum time frame. Also suggesting a distinct gardener at work in the front garden rooms, there are no *Leucojum* in the side pattern beds.

The cruciform pattern of *N. pseudonarcissus* does not seem an antebellum mode of planting at all, and none appear in the side pattern beds. That it appears across the garden in the western garden room eternity bed with *Leucojum* and 'Telamonius Plenus' places this flower as a post-bellum addition.

Establishing the majority of the front garden rooms to be ribbon-planting-inspired, pre-Victorian (with a Victorian overlay drift for good measure) is straight forward enough. However, determining whether the gardener was Frances Nesbitt McClintock (in conjunction with Nancy Narcissa) or a Hill (refurbishing beds after acquiring the property) is more problematic. Nancy having "daffodils" is some support for Frances having the small common trumpet.

It also seems counter-intuitive that a gardener of the swept yard tradition, with a fancy bulb garden, would smother the bulbs with a grass that would be five to six feet tall in the summer and obscure the view of the patterns. So at a minimum, the front pattern beds would have been planted by the first Hill gardener, well prior to 1900, if not Frances.

The side pattern garden presents its own conundrums. Many of the Victorian bulbs were obviously added to original paths. Those added to the original beds were spotted in, close to the central path or the house for maximum visibility. The bed most augmented is the one most visible from the house.

The side garden planting of *Lycoris* is postulated to be a late Hill-era addition. It seems unlikely that Caroline or Frances would have ever planted in the walkways, both of the antebellum formal, swept yard tradition. So although Frances may have added *Lycoris* to the front garden beds in a ribbon-style pattern, it seems highly unlikely she would

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1970s view of the side beds from the upper porch, showing outlines of the pattern beds

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have massed *Lycoris* in the walkways. Further, the presence of *Leucojum*, Nancy's favorite, in the front but not the side garden beds, is interpreted as support for two different gardeners adding *Lycoris* (Or, if Frances had added the *Lycoris* to the side pattern beds, why not some *Leucojum* while she was at it?).

Likely the upper two beds and outer paths were stuffed with bulbs by a Hill gardener, based on the dates of introduction the 'Stella' and 'Sir Watkin' and the presence of 'Sulphur Phoenix'. Further, the bulbs fill out the beds and lengthen the blooming season—particularly the late-blooming "Twin Sisters" and the fall-blooming *Lycoris*.

A possible explanation is that the back beds had their bulbs so severely dwindled from shade and/or drought that the beds needed replanting. It seems an odd pattern to have low-growing jonquils and hyacinths in four beds and then two beds with tall doubles; it lacks formal symmetry (and there is no hint of the doubles alternating with another bulb from the center to border sections of the beds).

The *N. × odorus* is a conundrum. Some of the planting locations in the pattern beds, specifically the lower four beds, suggest a rigid formality. Its prominence in the "eternity" bed indicates a post-bellum planting. Finally, it was planted outside the fence along the drive and other

spot plantings in the side pattern beds that are strongly post-bellum to Victorian in style.

Thus, if *N. × odorus* is taken out of the timeline, what remains is the *N. jonquilla* and feather hyacinths in the side pattern beds. They are the only bulbs not affiliated with any other bulbs or planting methods suggestive of a post-bellum context. Both are simple, small and fragrant, and much more in keeping in scale with the height of the granite beds.

In summary is a proposed history for the garden of Mountain Shoals: Caroline first planted for fragrance, and arguably for scale (the small bulbs not interfering with admiring the patterns). During the decades after the Civil War (1866-1890), the front garden was refurbished and replanted, either by Frances (more anecdotal evidence via Nancy's garden) or an early Hill (no evidence as yet, until the dwindled daffodils bloom and prove to be later hybrids). By 1900, a Hill gardener planted the tall grass. Around the same time (1890 to 1924), a Hill gardener added an assortment of bulbs to the side pattern beds, and daffodils around the property. Mrs. Irby made no notable changes to the bulbs. The current owner added his favorite shrubs and a few modern daffodils for good measure. Ultimately, however, all have admired and protected Caroline's pattern of love.



Photo by Martin Meek

Surviving Byzantine Gladiolus, Gladiolus communis byzantinus



Photo by Martin Meek

Surviving Feather Hyacinth, Muscari comosum 'Plumosum'

(Endnotes)

- 1 Leighton, Ann. *American Gardens of the Nineteenth Century "For Comfort and Affluence."* The University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst. 1987.
- 2 Hanson, Margaret Hill. Introduction to the Thornton Diary; first published in the *Woodruff News*, 1976.
- 3 1898 *Rare Florida Flowers and Fruits*. The Jessamine Gardens, Jessamine, Pasco Co., Florida. Collection of the author.
- 4 MSS 992, Hastings Seed Company Records, Cherokee Garden Library, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.
- 5 *Meehan's Monthly, a magazine of horticulture, botany and kindred subjects*. "New or Rare Plants" Vol. V, April 1895, p. 72-73. Thomas Meehan, editor. Thomas Meehan & Sons, Germantown, Philadelphia, PA.
- 6 Rand, Edward Sprague, Jr. *Bulbs, A Treatise on hardy and tender bulbs and tubers*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1884, p. 349.
- 7 Robinson, William. *The Gardener*, October 17, 1903, Vol. 64, p. 270.
- 8 "A Catalogue of Garden, Herb, Flower, Tree, Shrub, and Grass Seeds...No. 39" sold by Bernard McMahon,
- printed by William Duane, Philadelphia, PA [from Cherokee Garden Library, AHC, Cothran Collection; dated "pre-1804" based on 1804 date of No. 40]
- 9 *J. M. Thorburn & Co.'s Catalogue of Bulbs and Flowering Roots for Fall Planting 1909*. J.M. Thorburn & Co. 35 Barclay St. through to 38 Park Place New York. Collection of the author.
- 10 Anonymous. Louis LeConte bulb collection, Woodmanston, from the papers of John Eatton LeConte, The American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA
- 11 *Catalogue of Fruit and Ornamental Trees and Plants, Bulbous Flower Roots, Green House Plants, etc., etc., Cultivated at the Linnaean Botanic Garden, William Prince, Proprietor, Flushing, Long Island, near New-York*, 21st edition. New York: Printed by T. and J. Swords, No. 99 Pearl-street. 1822.
- 12 From the author's private collection.
- 13 Kirby, A.M. *Daffodils, Narcissus and How to Grow Them as Hardy Plants and for Cut Flowers with a Guide to the Best Varieties*. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1907.
- 14 Letter from Andrena Anderson Parker to Mary Anderson, March 26, 1956, in possession of Martin Meek, copy at Cherokee Garden Library, Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

The 'Peggy Martin' Rose Awards

William C. Welch, Texas A & M University

The Peggy Martin Rose Fund began after Peggy Martin, past president of the New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society and avid rose collector, returned to her home in Plaquemines Parish after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 to find a scene of total devastation. Her home and garden were inundated by 20 feet of salt water for two weeks and even worse, both her parents were victims of the flooding. When she returned several months later there were only two plants surviving: a crinum and a rose that we now know as the Peggy Martin Rose. Several years before the Hurricane I had spoken to the New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society while a guest of Peggy Martin and other friends in New Orleans. I brought back to Texas cuttings of the so far unidentified historic rose and observed it for several years at Fragilee, our weekend home near Brenham, TX. I was impressed with its bright pink clusters of roses and thornless stems. It is a vigorous but mannerly climber with few disease or insect problems; thriving in most soil types and with little irrigation once established. At first it bloomed only in spring but after several seasons it now



Photo by W. Welch

'Peggy Martin' roses trained on iron obelisks in Welch Garden, College Station, TX.

blooms in fall as well.

Upon hearing of Peggy's tragic losses and the symbol of hope provided by the surviving rose, I urged a number of rose growers to propagate and distribute this rose while donating a portion of the sale of each plant to the newly

The 'Peggy Martin' Rose Awards.....(continued from page 7)

established Peggy Martin Rose Fund. The fund's goal is to aid in the restoration of gardens in the swath of Hurricane Katrina. The growers responded generously and we are now able to disburse the collected funds. Others engaged in helping to establish the fund at the Greater Houston Community Foundation were Nancy Thomas and Nancy Godshall. Events like The Bulb Mart, a project of The Garden Club of Houston have sold hundreds of "Peggy Martin Roses" over the past several years and helped to spread the word even further. Many Master Gardener groups also helped spread the word in their communities.

The growers enthusiastically supporting the fund include Mike Shoup of the Antique Rose Emporium; Jason Powell of Petals from the Past Nursery (Jemison, AL), Mark Chamblee of Chamblee of Rose Nursery (Tyler, TX); and Aubrey King of King's Nursery (Tenaha, TX). Peggy Martin, now in Gonzales, LA, has provided numerous programs and generous support for the project. Articles promoting the project have appeared in many publications, including *Southern Living Magazine*.

Beautify Beaumont, Inc. has recently received an award of \$3,000 from the Peggy Martin Rose Fund for purchasing, planting and maintaining their beautification projects on Phelan Boulevard, a main artery in West Beaumont. Beautify Beaumont has been dedicated to restoring the community landscape since two hurricanes in the last five years created such destruction, with help from Micah Meyer, Texas AgriLife Extension Horticulture

Agent for Jefferson County, and Jefferson County Master Gardeners.

"Beauvoir," home of Jefferson Davis, and located in Coastal Mississippi, was severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Many historic buildings were destroyed including the cottages and second story mansions around Beauvoir. Hundreds of irreplaceable historical pre-Civil War era artifacts were either lost or destroyed. Valiant Mississippians have been working hard to restore and enhance historic structures and gardens. Included are exciting plans for an authentic restoration of the garden, which will include a splendid rose planting featuring the shrubs and climbers of the past which just by their names and fragrances evoke a bygone era. The fund is providing \$3,000 for this effort.

The Pitot House Museum and Garden, a Louisiana Landmark Society property, represents the late eighteenth-to early nineteenth-century country plantations along Bayou St. John in New Orleans. This house is the only Creole Colonial Style House Museum in New Orleans. The fund has provided \$6,000 and ongoing support for restoration of the garden's classic parterre and for plantings of old garden roses.



Photo courtesy Mike Shoup

'Peggy Martin' rose at Altadena Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, AL



'Peggy Martin' Rose at the Antique Rose Emporium, Independence, TX.

Photo by Ralph Anderson

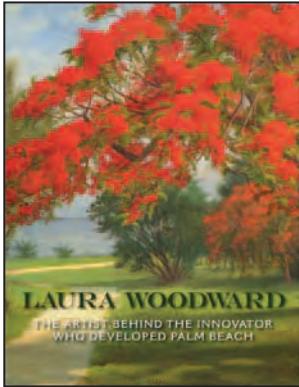
Book Review

Laura Woodward: The Artist Behind the Innovator Who Developed Palm Beach, by Deborah C. Pollack, Blue Heron Press; hardcover, 264 pp, 2009; ISBN-13: 9780977839919; list price \$39.99

In about 1889 Laura Woodward (1834-1926), a New York-based artist then wintering in St. Augustine, decided to visit a small south Florida community. Having spent several rewarding seasons painting the natural landscape and cultivated grounds of the north Florida resort, and enjoying the acclaim of guests at the fashionable Ponce de Leon Hotel and the patronage of its owner Henry Morrison Flagler, she was lured by descriptions of “the wonderful scenery, the beautiful flowers, and above all the cocoanut trees” of an eden bordered by the Atlantic Ocean on the east and Lake Worth on the west. The “hard trip of several days” over 235 miles involved careful planning: she traveled by two short railroad lines as far as Titusville and then on a riverboat to Jupiter, thence by a third train to Juno, Florida, and last by a mailboat to the village and the shaded veranda of the Cocoanut Grove House.

Some thirty years later Laura Woodward recalled the experience. “When I arrived I found the semi-tropical foliage of which I had dreamed. It was the most beautiful place I had ever seen.” Laura Woodward returned to her newly-found paradise the following year, and by 1893 she became a permanent, pioneering member of the winter colony at the place, which became Palm Beach. That same year Henry Morrison Flagler began construction of the Royal Poinciana Hotel, a vast six-story Colonial Revival-style frame hotel overlooking Lake Worth, which was completed in 1894. In 1895 he began building a second, smaller, ocean-side hotel, the Palm Beach Inn, which would be later enlarged and renamed The Breakers. In 1896 Mr. Flagler welcomed guests to both hotels on the first run of his newly-completed Florida East Coast railroad linking Palm Beach and the other Florida resorts with the Northeast.

In *Laura Woodward: The Artist Behind the Innovator Who Developed Palm Beach*, Deborah C. Pollack recounts the long career Laura Woodward enjoyed as a painter of Florida scenery, its fabled cocoanut palms, and Royal Poinciana flowers, and the important role she played as an artist in promoting and popularizing Florida. Doing so she also gives voice to the crucial association Miss Woodward held with Henry Morrison Flagler (1830-1913). As the chief developer of Florida in the late-nineteenth century,



Mr. Flagler appreciated the appeal of artists such as Laura Woodward and Martin Johnson Heade, among others, who became influential figures in the winter colony centered on Flagler's Ponce de Leon Hotel in St. Augustine. Beginning in the 1880s Henry Morrison Flagler's support was personal and financial. Artists had rooms and studios in the hotel, showed their works in exhibitions on its premises, and gained prominence as Florida's winter colonies grew and Mr. Flagler, Henry Plant, and other capitalist/developers prospered.

Laura Woodward came first to St. Augustine in the 1880s as a winter resident and remained there until 1893, when she decamped for Palm Beach. In this new resort she continued to enjoy the patronage of the now legendary Florida developer up to his death in 1913. Today many of her paintings hang in Whitehall, his winter mansion completed in 1902 and now the Henry Morrison Flagler Museum. Laura Woodward remained a resident of Palm Beach into 1926 when she relocated to St. Cloud, Florida. There she celebrated her 92nd birthday on March 18th and died on May 9th.

In the pages of *Laura Woodward* Deborah C. Pollock focuses her study on the artist and her years in Florida. This well-researched narrative, supported by endnotes, comprises four of the book's five chapters. It also represents the last thirty-seven years of Laura Woodward's long life. The first decades of the artist's life are compacted in an opening chapter that begins with Miss Woodward's birth in Mount Hope, Orange County, New York, in 1834. The story moves quickly into the 1870s, when Laura Woodward appears as a member of the Hudson River School and one of a small, emerging group of female artists gaining presence in New York. Her evocative landscapes painted in Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and on the coasts of Massachusetts and Maine were exhibited at the National Academy of Design from 1872 to 1891, the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, the Brooklyn Art Association, the American Art Galleries, and at other venues throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Her works, including “Yellow-Birds and Cardinal Flowers,” were sometimes reproduced as chromolithographs by Louis Prang and Company and enjoyed wide circulation. She also sold her works through commercial galleries and on occasional saw paintings sold at art auctions in New York. Laura Woodward was accomplished, successful, and experienced when she came to Florida and embarked on a second career as a painter of its landscape, palms, plants, and flowers.

Laura Woodward: The Artist Behind the Innovator Who Developed Palm Beach provides an excellent introduction to the Society's planned 2012 meeting at the Edison and Ford Estates at Fort Myers. Thomas Alva Edison

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began development of his own lush, semi-tropical winter refuge, Seminole Lodge, in 1886. By the turn of the century Henry Ford was wintering on an adjoining estate called The Mangoes. The Florida which SGHS members remember from our visit to Tallahassee in 1997 represented an early stage in the state's development. At Fort Myers we will experience another era. In the pages of this book we see black-and-white period photographs

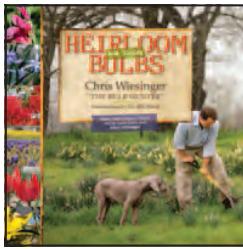
of the lush landscape that drew these titans of American industry to Florida and the paintings Laura Woodward made of an extraordinary place, at a critical point in its history, which she came to appreciate above all others.

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Vale, North Carolina

In Print

Heirloom Bulbs for Today, by SGHS member **Chris Wiesinger** and Cherie Foster Colburn, with botanical illustrations by South African artists Loela Barry and Johan Kritzinger, published by Bright Sky Press, November 2010.

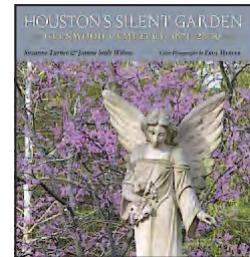
Wiesinger, owner of The Southern Bulb Company, and dubbed "the bulb hunter" by the *New York Times* in 2006, offers a modern-day look at the cultural histories of heirloom bulbs from the gardeners who grew them. Historic anecdotes describe the long journey of both native and pass-along bulbs to American gardens. Cherie Foster Colburn, an award-winning author and landscape designer, provides low-maintenance, sustainable designs for year-round appeal. The book can be purchased through The Southern Bulb Company Web site at: www.southernbulbs.com. Southern Bulbs specializes in rare and tough bulbs and Wiesinger and his team are known for rescuing bulbs for the southern gardener. Southern Bulbs provides an extensive



range of flowering bulbs, including heirlooms in limited quantities as well as Texas "found" bulbs, to gardeners across the southern U.S. and other warm climates.

Houston's Silent Garden: Glenwood Cemetery, 1871-2009, by SGHS member **Suzanne Turner** and Joanne Seale Wilson, with photographs by Paul Hester, TAMU Press, 2010; ISBN-13: 978-1603441636.

This book chronicles the story of Glenwood Cemetery's origins from its inception in 1871 to the present day. Glenwood Cemetery has long offered a serene and pastoral final resting place for many of Houston's civic leaders and historic figures. In *Houston's Silent Garden*, Suzanne Turner and Joanne Seale Wilson reveal the story of this beautifully wooded and landscaped preserve's development—a story that is also very much entwined with the history of Houston. (The book will be reviewed in an upcoming issue of *Magnolia*.)



SGHS Annual Meetings on the Horizon

Southwest Florida: our 2012 Destination

The 2012 annual meeting of the Southern Garden History Society will be based at the Edison & Ford Winter Estates, in Fort Myers, Florida. This will be the society's first return to Florida since the 1997 meeting in Tallahassee. The planning committee for 2012 is chaired by Chris Pendleton, President and CEO of the Edison & Ford Winter Estates, who reports that further activities in store will include tours of gardens in downtown historic Fort Myers and to Fort Myers Beach with a visit to Mound House and Gardens, a recently restored historic home and garden built atop a Calusa Indian Shell Mound. Preliminary plans are well underway for tours of several private gardens as well as tours of propagating nurseries for

palms, bougainvillea, and agricultural plants and a cruise to include Sanibel and Captiva Islands as well as the estate of Byron Collier on Useppa Island.

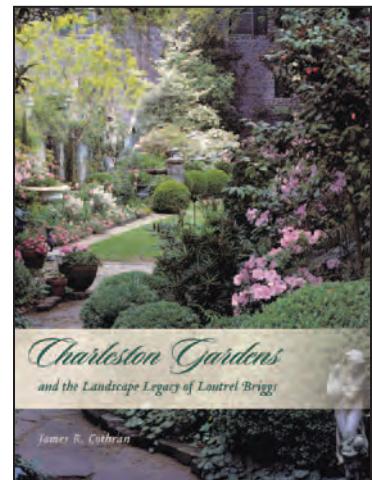
2013 Annual Meeting will take place in Lynchburg, Virginia, May 4-6. Board member Jane White is coordinating the meeting and promises visits to Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, the Anne Spencer Garden, Saunders Boxwood Nursery, and Pharsalia.

2014 Annual Meeting is slated for a return to Savannah, Georgia, date TBD. Meeting coordinator is Lucy Hitch.

Members in the News

New Orleans attorney Malvern C. Burnett, longtime SGHS member and historian **Sally Reeves**, and Brad Vogel, the National Trust for Historic Preservation Ed Majkrzak Historic Preservation Fellow, completed a documentation effort of the contributing structures in the Mid-City National Register Historic District that were threatened with demolition to make way for the new U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital in the Lower Mid-City neighborhood. They matched the addresses against a list of "historic and realistic to move" structures prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office. Their effort resulted in a booklet, later printed and distributed by the Louisiana Landmarks Society, which showed that more than 100 historic, contributing structures (and more than 100 others that were not contributing and historic) would fall to bulldozers. In September, local and national nonprofits in New Orleans began relocating these historic structures out of the footprint of the new U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital in the Lower Mid-City neighborhood.

James R. Cothran's latest book, *Charleston Gardens and the Landscape Legacy of Loutrel Briggs*, is featured in the December 2010 E-Newsletter of The Cultural Landscape Foundation at <http://tclf.org>. TCLF is an organization, founded in 1998 by Charles Birnbaum, FASLA, dedicated to increasing the public's awareness and understanding of the importance and irreplaceable legacy of its cultural landscapes (Jim's book, recently published by the University of South Carolina Press, will be reviewed in an upcoming issue of *Magnolia*. For more about the book, visit USC Press at www.sc.edu/uscpress/books/2010/3891.html)



In Memory of Mary Helen Ray

On October 8, 2010, the Southern Garden History Society lost a long-time and dedicated member, Mary Helen Ray, who died at her home in Savannah, Georgia. Mary Helen devoted much of her life to promoting the conservation of natural resources, urban beautification, and to preserving historic buildings, sites, and gardens. She chaired the Savannah Park and Tree Commission for 17 years and also the LeConte-Woodmanston Botanical Garden Restoration. She was active in many garden-related organizations, including The Garden Club of

Georgia (serving as president from 1971-73). Mary Helen was the principal coordinator of the Southern Garden History Society's 1989 annual meeting, held in Savannah, and she attended most annual meetings over the past two decades.



18th Biennial Conference on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes

A New World: Naturalists and Artists in the American South, Sept. 22-24, 2011, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

The early South attracted many curious naturalists who collected, shared, depicted and described the rich and colorful world of southern plants, birds, animals and insects. This conference will follow the stories of these early adventurers, botanists



and gardeners and examine how their work informs current understanding of the early southern landscape.

Conference speakers include: Andrea Wulf, Joel T. Fry, Gary Mullen, Kathryn Holland Braund, Charles Williams, Peter Hatch, James Reveal, & Bob McCartney. For program and registration information, contact Sally Gant, sgant@oldsalem.org / www.oldsalem.org



Southern Garden History Society
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See you in
Baton Rouge!

April 1-3, 2011

Awards and Scholarships

- **Flora Ann Bynum Award** is the highest honor bestowed by the society
- The title of **Honorary Director** of the Board of Directors
- **Certificate of Merit**
- **Scholarships** to assist students attending the SGHS annual meeting

Details, requirements, and directions for submitting nominations are posted on the SGHS Web site. For those without internet access, please contact Peggy Cornett, *Magnolia* editor, for a copy of this document.

Annual Membership Dues

The society's membership year is from **August 1—July 31**. The membership secretary will mail renewal notices in the summer for the 2010-2011 year. Membership categories:

Benefactor	\$500
Patron	\$250
Sustainer	\$100
Institution or Business	\$75
Joint	\$50
Individual	\$30
Student	\$15

For more membership information, contact:

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Memberships can now be made electronically on our Web site!

www.southerngardenhistory.org

Deadline for submitting articles for the Spring issue of *Magnolia* is February 18, 2011.

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