

# Roots of the Bluegrass

*Lexington, Kentucky*  
*May 26-28 2017*

Southern Garden History Society  
35<sup>TH</sup> Annual Meeting  
"Roots of the Bluegrass"



Photo by Tom Kimmerer



*Lexington, Kentucky*  
*May 26-28 2017*

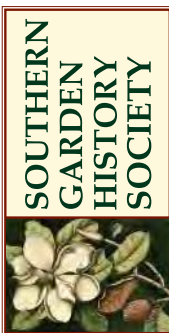
[southerngardenhistory.org](http://southerngardenhistory.org)

We welcome you to the 35th Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society as we celebrate the "Roots of the Bluegrass" in Lexington, Kentucky, May 26-28, 2017.

Centered in the Bluegrass Region of north central Kentucky, this area is a gently rolling limestone plain characterized by hardwood forests and pastures with springs and caves. This lime rich soil and the famous Kentucky bluegrass have combined for unprecedented success in breeding and racing of prized horses.

Noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted praised Lexington during his second tour of the southern states, saying of all "Southern towns there are scarce two that will compare with it for an agreeable residence." He further observed that "the rolling woodland pastures come close upon the city, and on almost every knoll is a dwelling of cost and taste."

We believe you will find this to be true today, and we invite you to spend Memorial Day weekend with us in this lovely historic setting.



Southern Garden History Society  
PO Box 15752  
Winston-Salem, NC 27113



## Friday

Registration tables in the Hyatt Regency Hotel will be open from 8am until 2pm. Meeting and lectures begin at 12:30. **Lunch will be on your own.**

Our opening lecture will be an overview of the Bluegrass Region, given by Crit Luallen, a former Kentucky official whose roots run deep in the Bluegrass. A second lecture will feature the Jens Jensen landscape at Airdrie Stud, a "great work of art on the ground" as described in *The Golden Age of American Gardens*. Our speaker is Libby Jones, a central Kentucky farmer, former First Lady, and seventh generation Kentuckian.

After a break we will learn about the Olmsted Brothers' design for the Ashland Park neighborhood surrounding Henry Clay's home, Ashland. Beginning in 1904, this 600-acre estate was planned for a residential development featuring curving streets with green spaces and a variety of architectural styles. Our concluding lecture of the day will bring to light various forgotten gardens and grand estates of the Bluegrass, including the famous Elmendorf Farm.

We will board buses for a visit to nearby Botherum, a Greek Revival home built in 1851 by noted Lexington architect John McMurtry for Madison Conyers Johnson, one of Abraham Lincoln's confidants. Our host, noted garden designer Jon Carloftis, has restored the grounds to feature a formal garden, vegetable and herb gardens, woodland garden, and walled garden.



From Botherum we travel by bus to the Round Barn, formerly known as Floral Hall. Built in 1882 adjacent to the track called The Red Mile, the building was originally used as an exhibition hall for floral and agricultural displays. We'll visit the museum, enjoy libations and dinner.

Of course no visit to Kentucky would be complete without a bourbon tasting!

## Saturday

On Saturday morning our presentations begin with a lecture by Tom Kimmerer, author of *Venerable Trees: History, Biology, and Conservation in the Bluegrass*. Our second lecturer is Eric Brooks, Curator, who will speak on "Henry Clay's Promised Land, Ashland, the Henry Clay Estate." A presentation by Kim DeCamp of the Garden Club of Lexington will describe that group's garden restoration and current work at Ashland.



After a brief break, we will board buses for a tour of Ashland and its garden, traveling through the Ashland Park neighborhood on our route. Box lunches will be served on the grounds at Ashland.

Our next destination is Darby Dan Farm, where we'll have guided tours of this top-rated equine facility and historic working farm. Then our buses will take us on a guided tour of Old Frankfort Pike, known as "one of the ten best scenic drives in the U.S." We will pass by impressive thoroughbred horse farms, old limestone rock walls, and several properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

During early settlement days horses were used for transportation and industry, but impromptu sprint racing took place in town, even along Lexington's Main Street. In 1789 Henry Clay and other racing enthusiasts organized the Commonwealth of Kentucky's first Jockey Club. From this humble beginning has grown a multi-billion dollar industry, with its noted historic Keeneland Racecourse, where we will enjoy tours, cocktails and dinner overlooking the racecourse.

## Sunday Optional Tour (Limit 125)

We board buses in the morning for a full day of touring special sites, beginning with Lexington Cemetery. This nationally-known arboretum, incorporated in 1849, is enhanced by hundreds of artistic and historical shrines and monuments.

We journey next to Gainesway, a private working horse farm and public arboretum of 1,500 acres along Paris Pike. There we will tour private garden areas, including the kitchen garden designed by Rosemary Verey. Heading back to historic Gratz Park, we will eat our box lunches and then split up for walking tours of the Gratz Park historic district with private gardens and the Hunt-Morgan House.

Our final stop of the weekend will be historic Cave Hill. The present owners are graciously allowing us to visit where the bones of a 1928 Ellen Biddle Shipman garden remain. We'll return to the hotel lobby by 4 p.m.



## Accommodations & Transportation

The headquarters hotel for all guests, programs and tour departures will be the Hyatt Regency, 401 West High Street, Lexington, KY 40507, phone 859-253-1234. The room rate is \$129 plus tax. The cutoff date for reservations is April 28, 2017. To receive this discounted block rate, identify that you are with the Southern Garden History Society. Bluegrass Airport (LEX) is 6 miles from the Hyatt Regency, which offers a complimentary shuttle to and from the airport.

## A Day On Your Own

Lexington offers many interesting activities for visitors, and we encourage you to consider staying an extra day to explore. Suggested sites to visit include: Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill ([shakervillageky.org](http://shakervillageky.org)), Pope Villa ([bluegrasstrust.org](http://bluegrasstrust.org)), Woodford Reserve, Castle and Key and other sites along the Kentucky Bourbon Trail ([kybourbontrail.com](http://kybourbontrail.com)), Berea College and its artisan community, the Mary Todd Lincoln House, Jack Jouett House, the UK Arboretum, and Frankfort with capitol grounds, Liberty Hall and more. Visit [www.visitlex.com](http://www.visitlex.com) for other ideas.

## Contact

### Meeting/Program information:

Leslie James, 2017 Annual Meeting Chair  
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### Registration & membership information:

Virginia Hart, SGHS Administrator  
336-770-6723 or [virginia.hart@southerngardenhistory.org](mailto:virginia.hart@southerngardenhistory.org)

## Registration

Registration for the 35th Annual Meeting is limited to 175 Southern Garden History Society members on a first-come, first-serve basis. **Registration is by mail only. Registrations will be accepted in postmark date order. Please, only two names per form;** for additional forms or questions about registration, contact Virginia Hart, [virginia.hart@southerngardenhistory.org](mailto:virginia.hart@southerngardenhistory.org).

The registration fee is \$395. This fee includes activities on Friday and Saturday, including lectures, transportation, tours, receptions and meals, as noted. An additional \$100 fee is required for the Sunday optional tour. Cancellations made by April 30 will be eligible for a full refund. Refunds for cancellations after April 30 will be determined by available funds after all conference expenses have been paid.

## Registration Form

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If vegetarian meals are required, check here:

If special assistance is required, check here:

Please print the name & affiliation or city you would like on your name tag:

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_ (Affiliation/City) \_\_\_\_\_

## Remittance

Registration (\$395 per person) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Optional Sunday tour (\$100 per person) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment is by check only.**

Make check payable to Southern Garden History Society

Mail Registration & Payment to:

**S.G.H.S. PO Box 15752 Winston-Salem, NC 27113**