



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

Magnolia

Publication of the Southern Garden
History Society

Vol. XXVI

No. 2

Spring 2013

Stanley W. Abbott: Visionary Planner of the Blue Ridge Parkway

By Gale Roberts (daughter of Stanley Abbott), Williamsburg, Virginia

In 2010, the Blue Ridge Parkway celebrated its 75th anniversary. This 470-mile scenic highway, passing through twenty-nine counties in Virginia and North Carolina, is now enjoyed by seventeen million recreational visitors annually. Since 1946, the Blue Ridge Parkway has been the most visited site in the entire National Park system and is often called "America's Favorite Drive."

On September 11, 1935, when actual construction began, the dream of the Blue Ridge Parkway, which arose during the Great Depression, was far from becoming a reality. It was during this period of momentous historical events that Stanley Abbott embarked upon his career. In December 1933, at the age of twenty-five and just three years out of Cornell University, Abbott was hired by the Department of the Interior to be the first resident landscape architect of the proposed "scenic highway." Franklin D. Roosevelt had just been elected president in a landslide victory, bringing in the era of the New Deal. The idea of linking the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks – "Park to Park" would bring desperately needed relief to the Southern Appalachians.

In *Design with Culture* Ian Firth wrote: "An enormous undertaking, the Blue Ridge Parkway was the product of many people's efforts: in the Roosevelt administration, in Congress, in the governments of Virginia and North Carolina, and in the many federal and state agencies involved."¹ He further stated: "At a length of hundreds of miles, the Blue Ridge Parkway was by far more ambitious in scale than any of its predecessors. Indeed, it was the longest road ever planned as a single unit up to that time in America. Moreover, it was distant from all major cities, and it was to pass through the most mountainous terrain east of the Mississippi."² Simultaneously, a love affair with



Photo: National Park Service

The Parkway was designed to reveal landscapes as motorists rounded gentle curves.

the automobile had gripped the country. Americans were experiencing a national park movement and becoming aware of the trend in preservation of our great landscapes.

In June 1933, the National Industrial Recovery Act authorized the Public Works Administrator to prepare a program to construct, repair, and improve public highways and parkways. Without this act, the Blue Ridge Parkway project would have been unfeasible, and the highway may never have been built at all. The initial appropriation of

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CALENDAR

Please visit the SGHS Web site, www.southerngardenhistory.org, for a complete and more detailed calendar with the latest updates and links to individual Web sites.

July 27, 2013. “Restoring Beatrix Farrand’s Gardens,” a seminar organized by The Beatrix Farrand Society, Bar Harbor, ME. Speakers include Gail Griffin (Dumbarton Oaks); Rebecca Trafton (Dumbarton Oaks Park); Carole Plenty (Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden); Kate Kerin (Bellefield); Sue Sturtevant (Hill-Stead); and others. Co-sponsored by the Garden Conservancy. Visit: www.beatrixfarrandsociety.org

September 6-7, 2013. 7th Annual Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello. Educational, family-friendly event, held in the gardens of Monticello, celebrating Jefferson’s gardening legacy and featuring heirloom fruits and vegetables, organic gardening, and seed-saving; sponsored by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and Southern Exposure Seed Exchange. Visit: www.heritageharvestfestival.com

September 26-28, 2013. “To Everything a Season,” 19th Conference on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes, Winston-Salem, NC; biennial conference, at Old Salem Museum & Gardens and Reynolda House Museum of American Art; co-sponsored by SGHS, explores historic methods and resources in cultivating, preserving, and preparing heritage foods and livestock in the American South. Visit: www.oldsalem.org or Sally Gant: sgant@oldsalem.org; (336) 721-7361.

September 28-29, 2013. Library of American

Landscape History Conference, “Masters of Modern Landscape Design,” Indianapolis, IN. Prominent scholars from across the country will gather at the Indianapolis Museum of Art to introduce their recent work on modern landscape architects, including Thomas Church, James Rose, Robert Royston, and A. E. Bye. The conference also will launch the eponymous new LALH book series: Each of the conference speakers is the author of a forthcoming monograph exploring the career, major works, and legacy of a modern master. Visit: <http://lalh.org>

October 4-5, 2013. “The Botany of Empire in the Long Eighteenth Century,” symposium at **Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.** This two-day symposium will bring together an international body of scholars working on botanical investigations and publications within the context of imperial expansion in the long eighteenth century. The period saw widespread exploration, a tremendous increase in the traffic in botanical specimens, significant taxonomic innovations, and horticultural experimentation. These developments will be revisited from a comparative perspective that will include Europe, the Ottoman Empire, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The symposium will coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the Rare Book Room at Dumbarton Oaks, and will feature an exhibit of botanical works from our collections. BotanySymposium@doaks.org visit: <http://www.doaks.org/news/botany-of-empire>

February 28-March 2, 2014. 32nd Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society in Savannah, GA. For details see article on page 11.

Stanley W. Abbott: Visionary Planner..... (continued from page 1)

four million dollars to fund Public Works in the Blue Ridge attracted a large pool of local relief-funded laborers eager to work. In addition, many highly trained and out-of-work engineers and landscape architects were hoping to be hired for this project.

Professor Harley Jolley wrote in 1987: "...it is extremely difficult today to properly appreciate the awesome mission given to those who pioneered the location, design, and landscaping of some five hundred miles of the nation's first rural national highway—along a route where magnificent, heavily forested mile-high mountains had been gashed by erosion, or exploited for commercial development."³ To Stanley W. Abbott, the man who was to administer development of this piece of "managed American countryside," the Parkway location posed a creative challenge. As Stan Abbott would later recall, "I can't imagine a more creative job than locating that Blue Ridge Parkway because you worked with a ten league canvas and a brush of a comet's tail."⁴

Stanley William Abbott was born in Yonkers, New York on March 13, 1908 to Edward and Eva Abbott. After attending public schools, he entered Cornell University in Ithaca and earned a B.A. in Landscape Architecture in 1930. Since the late 1920s Cornell's Landscape Architecture program, founded in 1904, was drawing on the resources of both agriculture and architecture, with a heavy dose of engineering. It was a rigorous five-year program. Abbott managed to build a strong academic record, while rowing on the Cornell crew, of which he was the captain in 1929.

Not long after graduation, Abbott was hired by the Superintendent of Construction for the Westchester County Parks Commission, Gilmore Clarke, a renowned landscape architect. For Abbott this was "a plum job." As it would turn out, this

was a fortuitous opportunity for his early career and would define his future.

Due to Clarke's experience with Westchester parkways, he and engineer Jay Downer were engaged by the National Park Service (NPS) to advise on the "scenic" parkway down South. It was at this time that Clarke recommended his young employee Stanley Abbott also be hired by the NPS to act as Clarke's "man on the spot" in Virginia. The eager young Stan Abbott showed up for work at the Department of the Interior in Washington, DC right before Christmas of 1933 and was officially hired to start the design challenge of the era—a parkway in the Southern Appalachians!

Living in Salem and newly married, Stanley often recalled how "the first offices were our dining room and the dining table was the drafting board. It was three or four months before we could arrange office space in downtown Roanoke."

After a few months on the project, the United States Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes had a dispute with Clarke and Downer over their fees, resulting in their resignation from the parkway project. Abbott was left to direct, and greatly influence, the design of the Blue Ridge Parkway. He remarked later that he felt fortunate that NPS, preoccupied with new and greatly enlarged responsibilities, left him to do his job. Abbott's design team included

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Facts about the Blue Ridge Parkway

- 470 miles long
- 190 miles of foot trails
- 14 visitor centers
- 281 overlooks
- 91 historic buildings
- 169 bridges
- 26 tunnels



Family Photo

Stanley W. Abbott, shortly after his 1930 graduation from Cornell University.



Family Photo

Stanley W. Abbott in the Roanoke, Virginia, offices of the Blue Ridge Parkway in the 1930s.

Stanley W. Abbott: Visionary Planner..... (continued from page 3)

landscape architect Edward Abbuehl, who became Abbott's right-hand man early in the planning stages. William M. Austin, resident engineer, was Abbott's counterpart in the Roanoke office. He had recent experience constructing the Skyline Drive. They all worked well together.

NPS maintains extensive records in its archives showing the development of Abbott's ideas regarding the Parkway progress as written in his monthly and annual reports to his superiors in Washington. Abbott also presented to civic groups and held public meetings with landowners. With this outreach, he quickly won the trust and respect of locals. He published his *Blue Ridge Parkway News* explaining what was going on and what was planned to the mountain farmers and parkway neighbors.

Strategies for retaining and restoring the vernacular landscape were advocated by earlier landscape preservationists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Abbott, inspired by them, applied these strategies to the Parkway design. Efforts were made to retain much of the evidence of the rural landscape that existed in the mountains before the Parkway intruded. Many structures, including Mabry Mill, Puckett Cabin, and Polly Woods Ordinary, were restored to preserve the cultural elements so important to the storyline of the region.

World War II changed everything. In 1943, at age 35, Stanley Abbott was drafted. Work on the Blue Ridge Parkway was two-thirds completed. After discharge,

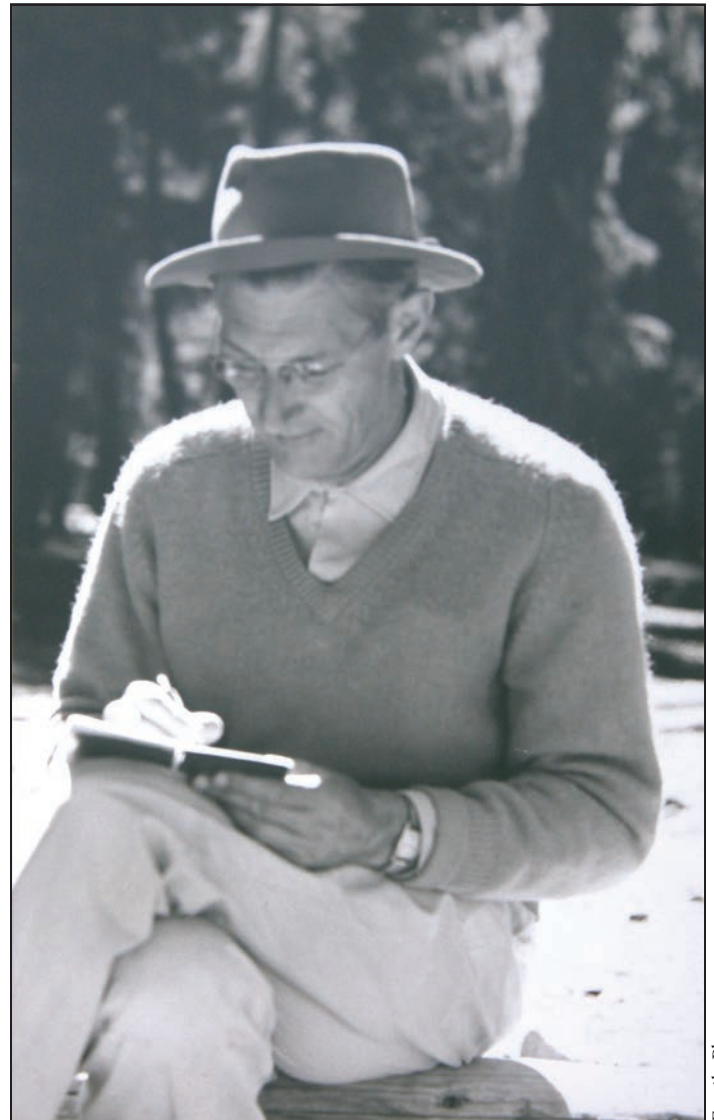
Abbott returned briefly to the Roanoke office; however, because construction funding was slashed during the war, progress slowed, and he was reassigned by the Department of the Interior to other projects. These included the North Cascades National Park, the Mississippi Parkway, and the Colonial National Historic Parkway. His last NPS assignment until he retired in 1965 was as Superintendent of the Colonial Parkway in Virginia. He started his private practice *Abbott Associates* in Williamsburg, Virginia joined by his son Carlton S. Abbott, FAIA. Stan Abbott consulted on a wide range of significant projects in Virginia, including Virginia Military Institute and Virginia Tech, plus Hollins, Radford, Mary Baldwin, and Roanoke Colleges. He served as a consultant for the design of the interstate highway system and planned several state and local parks in Virginia.⁵

Stan Abbott received many honors during his lifetime. He was inducted as a Fellow of the American Society of



Family Photo

Stanley W. Abbott had a part time landscape architecture practice from 1950 to 1975, focused on master planning for colleges and universities. Here he is presenting a plan for Roanoke College.



Family Photo

A gifted artist, Stanley W. Abbott kept his sketchbook handy during his work for the national parks.

Landscape Architects and the American Institute of Park Executives, and was given the Department of the Interior Distinguished Service Award. The Virginia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects gave him a citation for his work in historic preservation and design, and he served as Chair of the Virginia Landmarks Commission.

Stanley Abbott was designing until the day he died, quite unexpectedly, on May 23, 1975 at the age of 67. Three years later, NPS dedicated the lake at the Peaks of Otter at Milepost 86 to him, naming it Abbott Lake in his honor. The plaque on the boulder near the lake's edge reads:

**“Stanley W. Abbott
The First Resident Landscape Architect and
Planner of the Blue Ridge Parkway.
It was his vision, imagination, and
creative talents in the
Parkway's formative stages that
make the Blue Ridge Parkway unique”**

Gary Johnson, chief landscape architect and planner for the Blue Ridge Parkway since 1994, was humbled by the footsteps he followed in. “Nothing is taken lightly” he said. “I often have the thought when we are making a design decision and are doing something differently than in the past I think, what would Stan do?”⁶

This essay is an abbreviated version of the talk Gale Abbott Roberts presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Garden History Society in Lynchburg, Virginia, May 3, 2013.

(Endnotes)

- 1 *Design with Culture: Claiming America's Landscape Heritage*, Ian Firth, The Blue Ridge Parkway, Charles Birnbaum and Mary Hughes, editors, UVA Press, 2005, pp. 179-180
- 2 *Design with Culture: Claiming America's Landscape Heritage*, Ian Firth, The Blue Ridge Parkway, Charles Birnbaum and Mary Hughes, editors, UVA Press, 2005, p.183
- 3 Harley Jolley, *Painting with a Comet's Tail*, 1987, p. 5
- 4 IBID
- 5 *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, p. 9
- 6 Gary Johnson, “America's Favorite Drive,” *Smoky Mountain Living* magazine, Spring 2010, p. 46



Abbott Lake at Peaks of Otter, named in honor of Stanley W. Abbott.

Photo: Gale Roberts

SGHS Annual Meeting in Lynchburg Review

Review by Peggy Cornett, Susan Hitchcock, and Kenneth M. McFarland

The 2013 annual meeting of the Southern Garden History Society, held in Lynchburg, Virginia May 3-5, offered members an in-depth look at this historic city on the banks of the James River. The meeting, meticulously organized by Jane Baber White with her capable and dedicated team, was headquartered in downtown Lynchburg's Holiday Inn, where members enjoyed lectures, a luncheon, and a specially created “garden room” for attendees to browse through and purchase from an extensive selection of books, plants, and an array of locally crafted gardening items.

Appropriate to our mountain foothills location, Gail Abbott Roberts headed the Friday program with a talk about Stanley Abbott, chief landscape architect for the Blue Ridge Parkway. While much has been said about Abbott, she noted, her talk was rooted in a daughter's

unique perspective. She sketched out early days in New York, with study at Cornell followed by employment including work on the Bronx River Parkway. Later, it was his boss, Gilmore Clark, who recommended Abbott to head the Blue Ridge project, as funded through the National Recovery Act. Discussed was Stanley's marriage to Gail's mother and the Herculean endeavors required to make the parkway a reality. Along with applying his own design ideas to each road mile, bridge, and wayside, Abbott also headed public relations, including producing the *Blue Ridge Parkway News*. After World War II service, he then helped complete the Blue Ridge project prior to becoming superintendent of Williamsburg's Colonial Parkway.

Next on the schedule, a Will Rieley and Jack Gary dialogue examined nearby work at Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. Landscape architect for the Garden Club of Virginia, Rieley reviewed their projects at Sweetbriar

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SGHS Annual Meeting.....(continued from page 5)

House and Point of Honor, followed by greater details on their work at Poplar Forest. A 1773 inheritance of 11,000 acres and 135 slaves, Poplar Forest gave Jefferson the fiscal independence required for founding father status. It later provided a place for retreat and creative architectural-landscape expression. His structural-grounds marriage achieved a unique five-part Palladian combination of octagonal house, trees, and mounds. Jack Gary, Poplar Forest's Director of Archaeology, honed in on the current restoration of Jefferson's paper mulberry rows, which formed hyphens linking house to mounds. Archaeology has pinpointed tree sites, and it is now placing oval beds and "clumps" of trees once standing at the dwelling's corners.

Friday evening we were treated to tours and a gala dinner at Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. Each guest received a beautifully produced commemorative booklet celebrating three decades of the society. The keepsake, spearheaded by SGHS President Staci Catron and Vice-president Carleton B. Wood, included the names of the society's founders, board members, publications, annual meeting coordinators and locations, and 117 charter members.

Saturday's opening program was especially germane to our meeting's theme and locale: the life and garden of Lynchburg native and Harlem Renaissance poet Anne Spencer. Reuben Rainey, William Stone Weedon Professor Emeritus of landscape architecture, University of Virginia, spoke about the multitalented Spencer (1882-1975) who along with being a gifted poet and gardener was also a teacher, librarian, and civil rights activist. Rainey offered a detailed preview of not only the Spencer garden, but also of her amazing cottage and writing retreat, "Edankraal." Indicative of Spencer's many famous visitors is an iron head from Ghana still to be found in her pond garden, a gift from W. E. B. Du Bois and named by Spencer "Prince Ebo." Adding powerful impact to this presentation was Anne Spencer's granddaughter, Shaun Spencer Hester, who delighted the audience by reading selections from her grandmother's works and sharing insights into her life, garden, and poetry.

Next, Ted Delaney highlighted another spot in the Lynchburg landscape that has gained fame well beyond the region. The assistant director of the Old City Cemetery, Delaney reviewed the history of this burying ground, known in particular for its fine array of old roses, and explored what makes this Lynchburg landmark different from the later Victorian rural cemeteries and the history of the stewardship of the Southern Memorial Association. Burials in this twenty-six acre site included a large area of "strangers," many of whom were Irish immigrants and

African Americans. Three-quarters of all those buried in the Cemetery, from 1806 to the present, are African American, both free and enslaved; more than one-third are infants and children under the age of four. The Ladies Memorial Association of Lynchburg formed after the Civil War to oversee the care and marking of the 2,000 plus Confederate graves. In the 1980s, four ladies who had recently "inherited" sole membership in the still-existing Southern Memorial Association began the rehabilitation of the Confederate section. After a devastating wind storm in 1993, the ladies expanded the SMA stewardship to the entire cemetery. A plan by Rudy Favretti helped them develop the area outside the Confederate section as an arboretum that included trees, shrubs, roses, and perennials that reflect nineteenth-century tastes. Today the cemetery has become Lynchburg's most visited historic site.

The program continued with a presentation on Saunders Brothers Nursery by Paul Saunders and his son Bennett Saunders. Bennett gave a history of the nursery, which began as a partnership between five brothers in 1915. By the 1930s, they were growing mainly peaches and propagating boxwood. After his father, Paul, took over



Photo by Dean Norton

Enjoying an evening at Pharsalia are: (standing L-R) Justin Stelter, Susan Inglis, Will Rieley, Bill Welch, and (seated) Frances Inglis and Staci Catron.

the business in the 1970s, the focus shifted to a wholesale container nursery growing plants like boxwood, junipers, and hollies. In the 1990s, they added annuals, perennials, and fruit trees. In the fall of 2011 the Saunders turned their focus to boxwood blight, a fungus that was killing boxwood in Europe. They traveled to the United Kingdom to meet with boxwood blight experts and are currently collaborating with Dr. Kelly Ivers at North Carolina State University, an authority on the blight in the United States, to test resistant cultivars. Paul Saunders ended the presentation with an emotional tribute to his wife, Tatum, mother of seven sons, all of whom are involved with the business. The Saunders provided all participants with three cuttings of 'Vardar Valley', the boxwood that has

consistently gotten the highest overall score in their test garden.

The morning session concluded with a presentation by well-known author and art/garden historian Mae Brawley Hill, who surveyed American garden design morays of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, illustrated with paintings of the leading artists of the day. A series of American gardening books for ladies allowed women to take charge of designing the so-called "Grandmother's Garden," vernacular cottage gardens where beds of perennials and self-sowing annuals resulted in a helter-skelter arrangement. Artists of the day captured these gardens, especially the American Impressionist painters

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Photo by Staci Catron

Dean Norton and Peggy Cornett during the Friday evening festivities at Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest.



Photo by Bill Welch

Lucille Welch and Lee Bynum Schwall under a climbing White Lady Banks rose in the garden of Archer and Billy Hunt, during the Sunday optional tours

SGHS Annual Meeting.....(continued from page 7)

like Childe Hassam, whose scenes of Celia Thaxter's Maine garden became iconic. In the twentieth century, writers like Alice Morse Earle promoted "old time gardens." Her book of the same name contained 204 images of gardens like the Hampton-Preston House in Columbia, South Carolina. Before World War II, a fascination with our colonial past led to a revivalist style of garden design made famous by Virginia's Colonial Williamsburg. In post-war America, landscape architects like Thomas Church were moving toward a modernist approach that seemed at odds with old-fashioned gardens, but the Bicentennial of 1976 fostered a renewed interest in restoring the gardens of our most treasured historic sites.

Saturday afternoon was spent touring the Anne Spencer Museum and Gardens and the Old City Cemetery, sites covered in the morning lectures, as well as Point of Honor, the 1815 Federal style mansion above the confluence of James River and Blackwater Creek. At day's end, members were treated to a magical evening at Pharsalia, a stunning property nestled high on the slope of dePriest Mountain in Nelson County. [See lead article, *Magnolia* Vol. XXVI, No. 1 Winter 2013] Our hosts, Dick and Foxie Morgan, opened their historic home, lush gardens, expansive lawns, and bountiful orchards for members to enjoy during the reception, followed by a buffet supper under a sparkling tent.

Sunday Optional Tour

A cold wind greeted registrants who stayed for the Sunday Optional Tour, which took place in Rivermont, Lynchburg's premier streetcar suburb created in 1890. Wealthy citizens sought the more picturesque landscape of Rivermont Avenue, where attention to the natural topography resulted in a street of broad, sweeping curves. During the 1920s and 30s, Lynchburg architects Criaghill and Cardwell designed many of the houses on Lee Circle and Oakwood Place, the center of Sunday's walking tour of eight gardens. A variety of architectural styles have been preserved in these eight houses, and their adjoining gardens reflect an eclectic sense of design. Beginning on Lee Circle, the garden of Catherine and Mike Madden included a lush boxwood parterre front garden and exuberant beds of perennials, roses, and shrubs throughout the back. Next door, the garden of Rie and Eddie Godsey centered on a walled back garden with views of the larger garden beyond. Finally, the garden of Janet and Bob Hickman included ivy-bordered stone paths, pond, stonework, and towering boxwoods from the site's original layout. The Hickmans, plant connoisseurs known for cold hardy camellias and a multitude of daffodils, have recently added an heirloom apple orchard. The sole garden visited

on Rivermont Avenue was that of Annie and Bill Massie, designed by Alice Recknagle Ireys, a family friend and prominent late-twentieth-century landscape architect from Brooklyn Heights, New York.

At Oakwood Place, owners Martha Anne and Statham Gilliam shared their massive effort to rescue and preserve an overgrown garden designed by the renowned landscape architect Charles F. Gillette. The result is the original "falling garden," incorporating fountains, pools, and waterfalls. Next, Lisa and David Cresson's garden featured a terraced, central lawn with a diagonal cross axis terminating in a pool. Layered edging of groundcovers, perennials, and shrubs, reached up the slopes to integrate the lawn into the upper garden. The rear garden of Archer and Billy Hunt terminated in a mixed border enclosed by a stone wall with views of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Like many gardens we toured in Lynchburg, peonies were a major highlight. Before lunch, we visited the property of Toni and Jim Piggott, a New England-style farmhouse with an eclectic mix of outbuildings, garden rooms, creative and practical fencing, a vegetable garden, and a notable collection of bearded and Siberian iris.

The group enjoyed a buffet lunch in one of the historic greenhouses at Lynchburg Grows, an award-winning urban farm focused on improving the lives of at-risk youth and disadvantaged individuals through sustainable agriculture. Lynchburg Grows is also steward to nine historic greenhouses that once supplied 23% of Virginia's cut flowers. After lunch, visionary founder Michael G. Van Ness led a tour of the facilities, which restored the propagation of hybrid tea roses—once the operation's top crop.

Planning committee member and Diamond Hill resident, Mary Kathryn McIntosh followed with a walking tour of the Diamond Hill Historic District, a neighborhood of houses built before the turn of the century for Lynchburg's early manufacturing, business, and cultural leaders. Mary Kathryn's vast knowledge of the houses in the district made for an engaging final event of the Lynchburg meeting. Design details such as wrought iron fences and brick-patterned streets enhance a neighborhood that has experienced an exciting rebirth in recent years.

As participants disbursed at day's end, all agreed that Lynchburg was one of the best organized meetings on record. Superb speakers, great dinners at two notable historic sites, and some of Lynchburg's best private gardens contributed to the success of the thirtieth annual meeting of the Southern Garden History Society.

Members in the News

On April 17, 2013 at the Eighty-fifth Annual Convention Awards dinner of The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc., **Staci L. Catron**, Cherokee Garden Library Director at the Atlanta History Center, received the prestigious **Peachtree Garden Club Medal**, which is given to an individual member of The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. for outstanding achievement and awarded by the

Peachtree Garden Club of Atlanta, Georgia. Peachtree Garden Club President, Elizabeth Martin, presented the award to Ms. Catron for her exemplary work as Director of the Cherokee Garden Library as well as her outstanding work in the field of historic landscape and garden preservation in the state of Georgia.

Two Worthy Certificate of Merit Recipients

During the business meeting portion of the annual meeting in Lynchburg, Marion Drummond of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Davyd Foard Hood of Vale, North Carolina were awarded the Southern Garden History Society's Certificate of Merit for their outstanding work in advancing the mission of the society.

Marion Drummond was recognized for her life-long accomplishments as a writer, researcher, journalist, horticulturist, keen plantswoman, and leader. At the age of 62, she earned her Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture from Louisiana State University and went on to become the first Site Director and Curator of LSU's Hilltop Arboretum, a position she held for ten years. As curator she helped this fledgling institution transition from a private garden and native plant collection into a public botanical garden with an educational mission. According to Suzanne Turner, "Marion's contributions to the knowledge of southern gardens, and her ability to serve as a veritable 'pied piper' in leading so many in both Louisiana and in Mobile, where she directed the Botanical Gardens for several years, are well known to anyone who has been involved in the field..." Marion is highly respected by her peers in the Louisiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture, and earlier this year she received an Award of Special Recognition for Service to the Profession for her unique contributions and selfless promotion of the appreciation of plants in design. In 2011 she, along with Anne Legett and John Sykes, coordinated a highly successful SGHS annual meeting in Baton Rouge and she served two terms on the society's board of directors. Nurseryman and landscape designer Bobby Green writes: "Marion leaves an indelible impression on everyone she meets, a continuing legacy of promoting relationships, southern plants, and southern garden history."

The Certificate of Merit was also presented to Davyd Foard Hood for his many contributions to scholarship in the field of landscape and garden restoration and specifically for his dedicated service to the Southern Garden History Society. As Book Review Editor of *Magnolia* for the past eighteen years Davyd has submitted upwards of fifty reviews for virtually every issue. His in-depth analyses are consistently thoughtful, provocative, and candidly honest, and his superior erudition has helped to raise the caliber of *Magnolia* to a higher level of excellence. Davyd essentially single-handedly planned and coordinated the highly praised 2009 annual meeting in Camden, South Carolina and, the following year, he organized the fall board meeting of the Society in Richmond, Virginia. He has devoted hundreds of hours of uncompensated time in service to the planning committee of the Old Salem Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes Conference. "Aided by Davyd's tireless support," according to Ken McFarland, "the Conference continues to be one of the premier programs of its type." Davyd's efforts to preserve the Elizabeth Lawrence Garden in Charlotte, North Carolina, was specifically heralded by Patti McGee: "Not only was he an articulate and tireless advocate, but also his research and preparation of the nomination of the property for the National Register of Historic Places played a vital role in our success." More recently Davyd has worked with Ben Page and others to develop a cultural landscape foundation report for historic Orton Plantation in Wilmington, North Carolina. Page writes: "His consistently thoughtful research has revealed the rich landscape evolutionary history on this most important site... Davyd's work truly expresses the highest ideals of what I think our society holds as core values."

"Feeding the American South: Heritage Gardening and Farming"

Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes

By Martha Hartley, Old Salem Museums & Gardens

Industrial agriculture has not only altered the landscape in the South, but also the plants and animals used for food in America. Thankfully today, we are experiencing a reawakening to the superior goodness and flavor of heirloom fruits, vegetables and grains, and heritage breeds, and to the benefits of sustainable production methods. There is a resurgence of home gardeners, farmers markets, artisanal food, and local products on restaurant menus, as well as demand for organic and humane standards and sustainable practices. This movement is linked directly to cultural and historic landscape traditions, and the nineteenth biennial Conference on Restoring Southern Gardens & Landscapes (RSGL) will explore the edible Southern landscape. It promises to be a sensory experience with planting and cultivation, harvest and preservation, seed saving, farmers market shopping, cooking, and feasting all on the schedule.

Lectures on relevant topics begin with the Southern Garden History Society's Flora Ann Bynum keynote address by Barbara Babcock Millhouse, who will discuss her grandparents' farm in " 'The Cows Ain't All of It': The Reynolda Dairy and Farm, a Model for Progressive Farmers 1912-30." Preceding the lecture at Reynolda House Museum of American Art is the opening dinner recalling a festive barbeque given by R. J. Reynolds at his country estate in 1916, complete with Tamworth pig, now a rare breed.

Three Virginians will share their garden and orchard wisdom. Garden historian Peter Hatch reveals secrets of success in the kitchen gardens of Thomas Jefferson and his contemporaries; Wesley Greene, of Colonial Williamsburg's gardens, shares methods of year-round vegetable production; and Tom Burford, "Professor Apple," will inspire memory of orchard favorites. Recent publications by these noted authors will be available at book signings.

The nineteenth-century diaries of two Southern women, Catherine Ann Devereux Edmondston of North Carolina and Martha Turnbull of Louisiana, will be examined by historians Jo Ann Williford and Suzanne Turner, respectively. Insight and reflection on the gardens and landscapes known to these historic women, and in

their own words, will be highlighted.

As the conference setting, Old Salem Museum & Gardens' heirloom gardens, historic kitchens, and buildings provide for in-depth and hands-on learning. Historic methods and practices of cultivation, food preparation, and preservation will be addressed. Culinary Historian Michael W. Twitty will demonstrate African American foodways at a 1786 kitchen hearth; Ceramics Historian Brenda Hornsby-Heindl will discuss vessels for food preservation; and Old Salem Trades and Horticulture Staff will share the Miksch, Triebel, and Single Brothers' Gardens with emphasis on rare and endangered varieties

19th Conference on Restoring Southern Gardens & Landscapes

**FEEDING THE AMERICAN SOUTH:
HERITAGE GARDENING & FARMING**

September 26-28, 2013

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Sponsors:

Old Salem Museums & Gardens
Reynolda House Museum Of American Art
Southern Garden History Society



In the Tennessee Mountains, George W. Chambers, 1887.
Courtesy of the Tennessee State Museum. 89.108

listed on Slow Food's Ark of Taste. Heritage breeds will be on display at the Tavern Barn by the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy (ALBC). ALBC staff member Jeannette Beranger will discuss Southern livestock traditions in a presentation followed by a visit to the ca. 1850 Stauber Farm in nearby Bethania, North Carolina, where heritage breed production of chickens and St. Croix sheep is ongoing.

Safeguarding heirloom plants and heritage breeds for the future requires that they are grown, enjoyed, and eaten now. Winston-Salem's Beta Verde will create a Slow

Food supper using fresh ingredients from the Ark of Taste list. In Slow Food tradition, this conference dinner will celebrate conviviality and the pleasures of the table, the producers of the food and drink, and local food traditions.

Enjoy the sights, smells, tastes, and sounds of the historic Southern landscape in Winston-Salem this September. The RSGL Conference is co-sponsored by Old Salem Museums & Gardens, Reynolda House Museum of American Art, and the Southern Garden History Society. For more information, please visit www.oldsalem.org/landscapeconference or call 800.441.5305.

“Preserving Our Coastal Garden History,” SGHS Annual Meeting in Savannah, Georgia, February 28 - March 2, 2014

Mark your calendars for a late winter respite by joining your fellow SGHS members in one of America's oldest coastal cities. The meeting will feature gardens and homes within the Historic Savannah District and the Isle of Hope, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Friday's tours will include a visit to Lebanon Plantation, built in 1804 by James Habersham, which stands along the Little Ogeechee River a few miles south of Savannah. Originally a large cotton and rice plantation, the site lay abandoned following two hurricanes in the 1890s until 1916 when Mills B. Lane acquired it and began growing sugar cane and pine trees for naval stores. Lane was instrumental in establishing the Savannah Sugar Refinery and Union Bag Corporation to process the crops that were being grown in the coastal areas. Friday will also include a visit to Wormsloe Plantation.

On Saturday we will visit the Isle of Hope along Bluff

Drive, where we will enjoy camellia gardens, majestic live oaks, and beautiful views of the Intercoastal Waterways. The Cope/Jaakkola House, built in 1868, will be a highlight of the day. We will also tour Judge Solomon's camellia gardens and home, Welley Manor, designed and built in the 1920s, which overlooks marshes and Gimball Creek.

The Sunday Optional Tour will include three rice plantations in Liberty County entertainment by the McIntosh Shouters with traditional Geechee-Gullah ring shouts.

The hosting hotel for all guests, programs, and tour departures will be the Hilton Savannah Desoto, 15 East Liberty St., Savannah, GA 31401; (912) 232-9000.

Meeting brochures will be mailed to all current members on December 1, 2013. For more information, contact meeting chair Lucy Hitch, lucy.hitch@comcast.net



Lebanon Plantation.



Photos: Howard Morrison



Southern Garden History Society

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Annual memberships are due August 1, 2013.
Renew electronically at: www.southerngardenhistory.org



Awards and Scholarships

The **Flora Ann Bynum Award** is the highest award bestowed by the Southern Garden History Society. It is not awarded annually, but only occasionally to recipients who have rendered outstanding service to the society. Nominations may be made at any time by any member. The award will usually be presented at the annual meeting.

The title **Honorary Director** (Board of Directors) may be bestowed on individuals who have rendered exceptional service and made significant contributions to the society. Nominations for Honorary Director are made to the President by current Board members and are approved by the Board of Directors.

The **Certificate of Merit** is presented to a member or non-member, whose work has advanced the mission and goals of the society. Awarding of certificates will be approved by the Board of Directors and will usually be announced at the annual meeting.

Society **Scholarships** assist students in attending the society's annual meeting and are awarded to bona fide students enrolled in college and university majors relevant to the mission and goals of the society. The scholarship provides a waiver of registration fees plus \$500 to assist with travel and lodging.

Details, requirements, and directions for submitting applications are posted on the SGHS Web site: www.southerngardenhistory.org. For those without internet access, a copy of this document can be mailed or faxed. Contact Peggy Cornett, Magnolia editor.

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 2013-2014 year. Membership categories:

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

For more membership information, contact:
Virginia Hart, Membership Coordinator
Post Office Box 15752
Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27113
Phone (336) 770-6723

Email: membership@southerngardenhistory.org
Memberships can now be made electronically on our Web site!
www.southerngardenhistory.org

Deadline for submitting articles for the Summer issue of Magnolia is September 13, 2013.

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