



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

Magnolia

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Spring 2009

A Preview of Camden

By Davyd Foard Hood, Vale, North Carolina

The Camden Garden Club joins me in welcoming you to Camden. The choice of the weekend of April 3-5 for the annual meeting of the Southern Garden History Society reflects late March and early April as the high point for spring bloom in the city. It also came as the best choice of dates, being between the annual running of the Carolina Cup Steeplechase on Saturday, 28 March, an event that draws thousands of visitors to Camden, and the Easter holiday during the second weekend of April. We hope the weather cooperates, remains cool through the last days of winter, and that buds and bloom come at their usual time. Hope is the operative word in this instance as in our larger lives.

That said, we have devoted our efforts to matters of scheduling, selection of speakers, choices of gardens for the walking tours, and venues for meals over which we have degrees of influence. Our collaboration, and the cooperation of those on whom we have called, is represented in the announcement you received some weeks ago. The committee feels rewarded by your response and we look forward to a full meeting.

The Friday afternoon and Saturday morning paper sessions will be held at the Fine Arts Center of Kershaw County. The center will also be the location for book sales. A representative of University of South Carolina Press, which has books by both Walter Edgar and James Everett Kibler in print, as well as works by Jim Cothran, will have a book stall at the center. Members of the Garden Club of Virginia will also have available for purchase copies of their new book, *Historic Virginia Gardens: Preservation Work of the Garden Club of Virginia, 1975-2007*.

When the planning committee for this meeting was formed, Margot Rochester, a member of the Garden Writers Association and a published Master Gardener, joined us, and she participated until shortly before her untimely death on 28 October 2008. Her new, posthumously issued



The Sycamores

book, *Down to Earth: Practical Thoughts for Passionate Gardeners*, will also be available, as will the publications of the Kershaw County Historical Society. On Saturday Bill Patterson may also have stock from Roses Unlimited for purchase.

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CALENDAR

April 3-5, 2009. Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society in Camden, South Carolina. Plans are nearing finalization for the society's major annual event, which will include presentations at the Fine Arts Center of Kershaw County, dinner at The Terraces, walking tours of private gardens, and a day-long Sunday bus tour to Mulberry Plantation, Milford Plantation, Stateburg, and Pearl Fryar's topiary garden in Bishopville. Confirmed speakers include Walter Edgar, Jim Kibler, Marty Daniels, and Austin Jenkins. SGHS board member Davyd Foard Hood is coordinating the meeting with the Camden Garden Club. Registration brochures will be mailed to SGHS members. You must be a member to attend. Call Davyd Hood for more information at: (704) 462-1847.

April 18-25, 2009. Historic Garden Week in Virginia. Visitors will step through the gates of more than 250 of Virginia's most beautiful gardens, homes, and historic landmarks during "America's Largest Open House." Three dozen Historic Garden Week tours present a rich mosaic of some of the country's finest properties at the peak of Virginia's springtime color. Sponsored by The Garden Club of Virginia, local events are scheduled from the Atlantic Ocean to the Allegheny Mountains and will span the centuries from the early 17th through the early 21st. For Garden Week information: (804) 644-7776; gdnweek@verizon.net. As part of Historic Garden Week, special programs will be offered at Monticello and its new Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center April 18-19. On Sunday, April 19, at 6:00 p.m., Monticello presents "An Evening on the West Lawn," with tours of the house, followed by a lecture by Peter Hatch on "The Restoration of the Flower Gardens at Monticello." A reception and garden party on the West Lawn will follow. Attendance for this evening event is limited and registration is \$40 per adult. To register, call (434) 984-9880. For more about Monticello's special programs, visit: www.monticello.org

April 26, 2009. "Tulipomania: Banking with Bulbs during the Golden Age of Dutch Culture," an illustrated talk by Eric Haskell, author and professor at Scripps College. This lecture is the first of a double billing for the 4th Annual Bellefield Design Lecture Series, presented by the Beatrix Farrand Garden Association. The event will be held at the Henry A. Wallace Visitor Center at the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, 4090 Albany Post Road, Hyde Park, New York. For information and to purchase tickets in advance, contact Anne Symmes at info@beatrixfarrandgarden.org or call (845) 229-9115 ext. 26. For more information on the Beatrix Farrand Garden Association, visit: www.beatrixfarrandgarden.org

May 1, 2009. "The Natural Rhythm of Gardening," the Colonial Williamsburg Garden Symposium, Williamsburg, Virginia. Colonial Williamsburg's 63rd Garden Symposium will focus on the natural, seasonal rhythms of our landscapes and how to create gardens that are both aesthetically rich and ecologically sound. Speakers include Felder Rushing, horticulturist, writer, and lecturer, will begin the symposium with his philosophy on "Slow Gardening: *Enjoying Our Gardens in a Hectic World*." James van Sweden, author and founding partner of Oehme, van Sweden & Associates in Washington, D.C., will present "Natural Gardens: *Embracing an Aesthetic of Region and Seasonal Change*," Renee Shepherd, owner of Renee's Garden Seeds, will discuss "From the Ground Up: *What's New and Unique from Seed?*" and David Howard, horticulture consultant, who will discuss the trends in gardening he has observed during his 30 years of gardening in England. Information: (800) 603-0948; www.CWF.org

May 2, 2009. Garden Club of Georgia Historic House and Garden Pilgrimage, Waynesboro, Georgia. Tour includes 7 historic homes and gardens, including St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Burkeland and Garden. Proceeds support the Georgia Historic Landscape and Garden Grant Program. For more information, call Nancy Buttermark, (706) 437-8833.

May 23, 2009. 17th Annual Open House at Tufton Farm, Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants, Charlottesville, Virginia. Visit the CHP headquarters and nursery for the day and enjoy the historic roses, iris, dianthus, peonies, and spring-flowering perennials in bloom. The featured speaker, author Andrea Wulf, will present "Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession," followed by a book signing in the nursery. The popular workshop on rose propagation and identification, led by Dennis Whetzel, takes place in the afternoon. Refreshments will be served, and plants, seeds, books, and gardening tools and accessories will be available for sale. Visit www.monticello.org, or call (434) 984-9816.

June 7, 2009. "Gardens of the Arts and Crafts Movement," an illustrated lecture by SGHS member Judith Tankard, author and noted garden historian. This lecture is the second of the two events presented by the Beatrix Farrand Garden Association. (See more details under April 26 description above.) Ms. Tankard's talk takes place at 2 p.m. followed by a tea party and birthday cake celebrating Ms. Farrand's birthday. All proceeds support the continued preservation and interpretation of Bellefield, Beatrix Farrand's garden in Hyde Park.

September 11, 2009. Monticello Heritage Harvest Festival preview event begins with tours and workshops at Tufton Farm nursery of CHP, followed at 4 p.m. with a lecture by author Amy Goldman on "The Heirloom Tomato: From Garden to Table." This PowerPoint presentation will take place at the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center at Monticello. Registration is required. Call (434) 984-9880.

September 12, 2009. Annual Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello. This year's event moves from CHP headquarters at Tufton Farm to Montalto, the scenic mountain overlooking Monticello. This family-oriented event highlights non-profit organizations promoting organic gardening, the preservation of traditional agriculture, historic garden and seed preservation, and regional food. Enjoy a day of workshops and presentations by noted gardening experts, including William Woys Weaver, apple authority Tom Burford, traditional herb specialist Kathleen Maier, and many others. Co-organized by Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, and assisted by Piedmont Virginia Master Gardener groups. For information, call (434) 984-9836 or visit: www.monticello.org and www.HeritageHarvestFestival.com

September 24-26, 2009. "Returning to our Roots—Planting & Replanting the Historic Southern Garden:" the 17th biennial conference on **Restoring Southern Gardens & Landscapes**, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The year 2009 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the RSGL Conference, which was first convened at Old Salem in 1979. In celebration of this milestone, the 2009 conference returns to its roots in addressing plants and planting of historic gardens in the South. Sessions will include case studies of historic landscape and garden restoration, practical information on planning and maintaining the historic garden, and sources for heirloom and historic native plants. For program and registration information: (336) 721-7361, sgant@oldsalem.org

A Preview of Camden.....(continued from page 1)

First on the program Friday afternoon is Dr. Walter Edgar, who will be speaking to the evolution of Camden in its larger, regional historic and cultural context. Stephen Smith follows him at the podium with remarks on the architectural fabric and character of the city.

The Friday afternoon walking tour spans the city's known garden history. Place-making in nineteenth-century Camden is represented by Holly Hedge, an antebellum house built by William E. Johnson, who also first planted its gardens. A hand-painted turn-of-the-century view of its garden appeared on the "Save-the-Date" card, when it was owned by Frank Kellogg Bull, and another on the announcement mailing. A contemporary view, appearing herein, represents the remarkable survival of many important features of Holly Hedge to the present. This iconic Camden garden enjoyed the stewardship of long-term owners in the twentieth century including Marion DuPont Scott, who also resided at Montpelier in Virginia. The grounds at The Sycamores also includes nineteenth-century plantings, however, its principal landscape features date to the ownership of Henry Plimpton Kendall, from his purchase of the property in 1924 until his death in 1959. This work is attributed to Innocenti & Webel. Like several important Camden houses, including Holly Hedge, Kamschatka, and Horse Branch Hall, the grounds of The Sycamores include a stable, which here is home to the only two horses that live in the historic district.

Duffields is another of Camden's important twentieth-century gardens. In 1937 Miss Helen Harman relocated from Plainfield, New Jersey, and spent the years up to 1960, cultivating an important collection of camellias which now enjoy the stewardship of owners who acquired the property in 1992 and have steadily reclaimed it from overgrowth. The Witwer Garden, the newest of Camden's important gardens, dates to the mid 1990s and is enhanced with a free-standing conservatory now nearing completion.

On Friday evening Debbie Brewer, a member of the Society who has served also on the planning committee, and her husband Dr. Thomas O. Brewer, are our hosts for drinks and dinner at The Terraces at Plane Hill Plantation. Located a few miles south/southeast of Camden, The Terraces was the antebellum home of Alexander Hamilton Boykin (1815-1866) who created the terraced garden on the east side of the house. The pen and ink drawing of the house is reproduced from *Captain Alexander Hamilton Boykin*, a biography written by his grandson and published in 1942. In the years following the ownership of Miss Charlotte de Macklot Thompson in the early twentieth century, the garden was long neglected and became greatly overgrown. While rampant wisteria and other growth suffocated many trees and plants, the form of the terraces was preserved and this important reclaimed garden is being renewed and restored.

Saturday morning finds us returning to the Fine Arts Center for a series of four papers and the annual business meeting. While Camden has been home to many famous peoples through the years, Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut (1823-1886) stands at the top of its roster of citizens. Her

(continued on page 4)



The Sycamores, the front drive



Holly Hedge



Horse Branch Hall

A Preview of Camden..... (continued from page 3)

Civil War diary for the years 1861 through 1865 edited by C. Vann Woodward and published as *Mary Chesnut's Civil War* in 1981 by Yale University Press, is a landmark in American history. Marty Daniels will open the morning with "Mary Chesnut at Mulberry." James Everett Kibler, a long-time member of the Society, follows with a paper on the history of Pomaria Nurseries, the important supplier of plants, vines, trees, and shrubs to antebellum gardeners. R. Austin Jenkins will provide an overview of the native flora of the Camden area, plants that we will see throughout the weekend in town and country. William Patterson, the founder of Roses Unlimited, a major Southern grower of heirloom roses, concludes the paper session with an account of his privileged days as a rosarian.

Shortly after noon we will depart the Fine Arts Center for Kirkwood Lane and lunch at Millynn, a seasonal residence of Alice Flynn Milliken that is now the home of her grandson Victor Strauss. This appealing mid-1950s house occupies acreage on the south side of Kirkwood Lane that until 1947 comprised a part of the grounds of Horse Branch Hall. Lunch will be served on the south terrace that overlooks a lawn sweeping down to one of the ponds that link the gardens of Holly Hedge with Kendall Lake. The afternoon walking tour includes the grounds and gardens of Horse Branch Hall and Kam-schatka, which stand on the north side of Kirkwood Lane, and Kirkwood Common, a city park. Both houses are imposing antebellum frame dwellings and each features a stepped terraced garden that descends south to Kirkwood Lane. (Golf carts will be available for those who may find the ascents difficult.) Horse Branch Hall was built by Isabel Scota (McRae) McRae and was owned in the twentieth century by Ella Moore Belcher, a daughter of Benjamin Moore, the paint manufacturer.

On Friday morning the Southern Garden History Society board will meet in the library of the National Steeplechase Museum, which stands at the edge of the Springdale Racecourse. Saturday evening the museum will be the venue for a tented dinner allowing attendees the pleasure of visiting the museum and enjoying the vast expanse of green turf on which the Carolina Cup Race will have been run a week earlier.



Camellia japonica in Miss Helen Harmon's 1940's Garden. Photos by present owner Polly Lampshire.

The Sunday Bus Tour affords its subscribers an exceptional opportunity to visit three of South Carolina's most important plantations, all of which are National Historic Landmarks, together with Pearl Fryar's topiary garden at Bishopville, a late-twentieth-century garden that has gained a national renown in its own right. First in the morning, we will visit Mulberry, a handsome late-Federal period house completed in 1820 for Colonel James Chesnut II (1773-1866) and his wife. Also the home of James Chesnut III (1815-1885) and his wife, the diarist, it stands on the Wateree River plantation of the same name that has remained in the Chesnut-Williams family from the mid-eighteenth century to the present. Mulberry and Millford, our second stop in the morning, are linked in the person of Ellen Clarke Manning (1858-1930), a daughter of Governor John Lawrence Manning, the builder of Millford, who married David R. Williams

III of Mulberry. Millford is not simply one of South Carolina's great plantation houses, but it is widely regarded, together with its contents as "one of the best surviving examples of the taste Americans called Grecian during the second quarter of the nineteenth century." The "contents" are not furnishings in a conventional sense either. In 1841 and 1842 the New York firm of Duncan Phyfe and Son "delivered an enormous quantity of furniture to Manning's factor in Charleston, South Carolina." The furnishings

of Millford comprise a high percentage of that furniture. In 1902 Millford and its 4000-plus acres were sold into the Clark family where the plantation remained until 1992. In that year Richard Hampton Jenrette, a collateral descendant of Governor Manning's wife, purchased the plantation seat and the surrounding 400 acres including the stable, spring house, and other outbuildings. He soon undertook the splendid restoration of the house and a replanting of its gardens and grounds. Copies of Mr. Jenrette's book *Adventures With Old Houses* will be available for purchase. We will have our box lunches at Millford before setting out on the afternoon tour.

The Borough Plantation at Stateburg is the third of these three great plantations, each of which remains in the historic embrace of several thousand acres. Like Mulberry, the Borough Plantation has remained in the ownership of descendants of Thomas Hooper for whom it was built. The Federal-style plantation seat and its outbuildings are the largest collection of *pise de terre* (rammed earth) buildings in the United States. The gardens and grounds of the Borough House include both nineteenth and twentieth-century plantings and the secluded spot where Thomas Hooper and his wife are buried. Joel Poinsett, the United States minister to Mexico and the man for whom the poinsettia is named, died on a visit at the Borough House. His body was buried in the cemetery at the Church of the Holy Cross, which we will also visit. The Gothic Revival-style church, also built of yellow *pise de terre*, was designed by Charleston architect Edward C. Jones and completed in 1852. (The church, also a National Historic Landmark, is undergoing repair and is closed.)



Mulberry front view

Through fate—and human choice—a man named Pearl came to Bishopville, South Carolina, and in 1984 Pearl Fryar set about creating an evergreen topiary garden that has gained international appreciation. For those of you who have heard him speak or seen “A Man Named Pearl,” I need say no more. Others of you might go directly to his web site, www.fryarstopiaries.com, to see the pleasure in store for you on the 5th. Pearl Fryar will lead the tours of his extraordinary garden that is now a project of The Garden Conservancy and has its own support group, Friends of Pearl Fryar's Topiary Garden.

(photos continued on page 6)



Pearl Fryar's Topiary Garden

Photo courtesy of Bill Noble/The Garden Conservancy

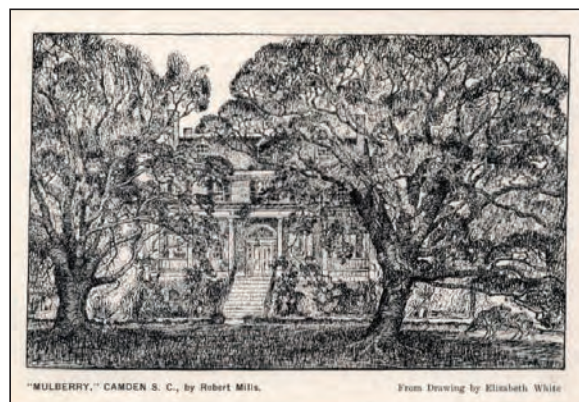


Millford

A Preview of Camden.....(photos continued from page 5)



Mulberry front steps 1907



Privet archway to garden 1930's



Mulberry front door with fan light 1983



Mulberry grove 1930



Mulberry east view 1950's



Mulberry southwest view early 1900's

2009 Marco Polo Stufano Fellowship Opportunity

The Garden Conservancy is seeking a gardener of outstanding promise to receive its ninth annual Marco Polo Stufano Garden Conservancy Fellowship. The Conservancy is looking for a gardener capable of making a significant contribution to American gardens in the twenty-first century.

The Conservancy wishes to recognize gardeners who have demonstrated the potential to distinguish themselves in the field of public horticulture, have the ability to work well with people and want to inspire in others a greater appreciation of excellence in horticulture, garden design, and garden preservation. Applicants should possess strong horticultural skills and aesthetic judgement, and sensitivity to the vision and motives behind the creation of exceptional gardens as well as to the needs of a new audience.

The goal of the Fellowship is to help a gardener attain the leadership skills necessary to manage an exceptional garden and develop it for public education and enjoyment. This year, the Fellow will gain practical experience with horticultural and management practices by performing hands-on work at the Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden in Charlotte, North Carolina. The house and garden on this modest property was the home of renowned garden writer Elizabeth Lawrence. It was the inspiration for Lawrence's life-long celebration of Southern horticulture and was a living laboratory for the study and appreciation of plants and garden design. Wing Haven Foundation recently purchased the Lawrence property and the Garden Conservancy holds a conservation easement to protect this property and is now working with Wing Haven to plan for its long-term management and public use. (See below for a description of the Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden.)

The 2009 Fellow will work with Wing Haven's horticultural team to care for the garden, revitalize portions of it, assist with further documentation of the garden, and be part of developing the Lawrence garden as a horticultural study center. This will involve hands-on garden maintenance such as weeding, pruning, watering and propagating as well as preservation maintenance such as rejuvenative pruning and caring for heritage plants. The Fellow will help identify many of the herbaceous perennials and small bulbs planted by Lawrence and complete an inventory of herbaceous plants. Further documentation of the garden and its history is underway and there may be opportunities for the Fellow to assist with this important preservation planning work.

The Garden Conservancy currently works with sixteen preservation projects including the Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden. These projects, along with approxi-

mately twenty additional gardens that receive preservation assistance, range from significant historic landscapes of recognized designers now under restoration to small, personal gardens whose creators are still actively involved in their development.

The Fellowship is from September 8, 2009 to June 11, 2010. It includes a stipend of \$28,000 and housing. The Fellow is expected to work 40 hours/week including 2 Saturdays a month.

To Apply

Those interested should submit a current resume with cover letter to the Fellowship Office at the address below, or by e-mail to fellowship@gardenconservancy.org by March 30, 2009. **Candidates must be U.S. citizens or have a current, valid immigrant visa.** Resumes and letters will be reviewed by Garden Conservancy staff and members of a national search committee. Interviews for finalists will be scheduled in May 2009.

For more information about the fellowship, please contact:

Fellowship Office
The Garden Conservancy
P.O. Box 219
Cold Spring, New York 10516
(845) 265-9396, ext. 18
fellowship@gardenconservancy.org

The Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden

Elizabeth Lawrence (1904-1985) was already a recognized garden designer and writer when, in 1949, she moved from Raleigh to Charlotte, North Carolina, and began making a garden. Lawrence, the only woman in the first program of landscape architecture offered in the South is regarded as a preeminent figure in the region's horticultural history. As she wrote in an autobiographical essay published posthumously in the collection *A Garden of One's Own*, Lawrence quickly learned "that a knowledge of plant material for the South could not be got in the library, most of the literature of horticulture being for a different climate, and that I would have to grow the plants in my garden and learn about them for myself." Her books and articles on what she learned constitute a curriculum on gardening in the South and a distinguished library

(continued on page 11)

Historic Virginia Gardens: Preservation Work of the Garden Club of Virginia, 1975-2007, by Margaret Page Bemiss, photographs by Roger Foley; Hardcover, 304 pages, 125 color photographs, 2 halftones, 45 line drawings; ISBN: 978-0-8139-2659-9; \$49.95

For more than seventy-five years, The Garden Club of Virginia has undertaken garden research and preservation work at numerous historic sites across the Old Dominion, restoring and creating beautiful landscapes for the education and enjoyment of all, from backyard gardeners to design professionals. *Historic Virginia Gardens* documents in breathtaking fashion this important contribution to the Commonwealth's botanical and architectural heritage. Picking up where an earlier volume, dedicated to the period from 1930 to 1975, left off, this new book brings the Club's work from the period 1975 to 2007 to life through a graceful and informative text by Margaret Page Bemiss, a host of historical and contemporary drawings, extensive native and heritage plant lists, and 125 splendid new color photographs from the award-winning garden photographer Roger Foley.

The gardens highlighted here range in location from the Eastern Shore to Blacksburg, and date from the seventeenth century to the twenty-first. Margaret Bemiss describes not only the preservation of the gardens, but also each place, its builder, and its historic context. Giving the reader a fuller understanding of why each particular garden or landscape was worth restoring or re-creating, Bemiss explains the site's significance, in Virginia's rich history as well as in the history of gardening and landscape design. In addition to Foley's photographs, each narrative is also accompanied by bird's-eye-view drawings and site plans for the gardens, along with working drawings of garden buildings, furniture, fences, and gates. Of particular interest to practicing gardeners and garden historians is the comprehensive list of native and imported plants that were utilized in the gardens. The significance of the

projects, from George Washington's Mount Vernon and Gari Melchers's Belmont to the Prestons' frontier home in Blacksburg and Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, makes this book of interest not only to gardeners and landscape architects, but also to anyone with an interest in American history.

Historic Virginia Gardens is sure to find a treasured

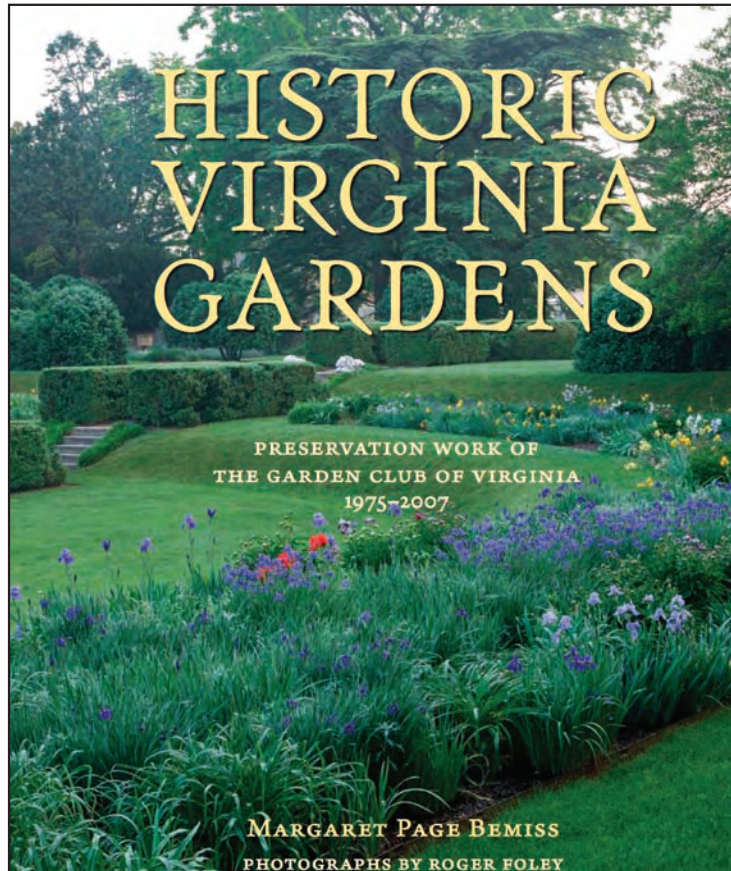
place on the library shelf beside its predecessor, which was praised by the *Virginian-Pilot* as a "book [that] will please any gardener, be it a group restoring grounds around a shrine or a suburbanite pondering whether to plant phlox or periwinkle along the front walk."

Margaret Page Bemiss is a current member and former president of the James River Garden Club. She has also been a member of the Restoration Committee of The Garden Club of Virginia, and served on the Archive of American Gardens Committee of The Garden Club of America. Roger Foley's award-winning landscape and garden photography has appeared in books and

magazines for more than 20 years. He is the sole photographer in nine books, including the two award-winning books Washington's Gardens at Mount Vernon and Seascape Gardening.

Noisette Roses: 19th Century Charleston's Gift to the World, edited by Virginia Kean, includes papers by several authors and contributors; published by the Charleston Horticultural Society; 96 pages, full-color illustrations throughout, paperback; \$17

Noisette Roses: 19th Century Charleston's Gift to the World is the first book to be published in America that is solely dedicated to an analysis of the Noisettes, a class of rose born in Charleston, South Carolina not long after the American Revolution. It is a unique story that should appeal to a wide audience of lovers of old roses and gardeners worldwide as well as Southern history buffs, admirers of historic Southern gardens, and the many visitors to



Charleston.

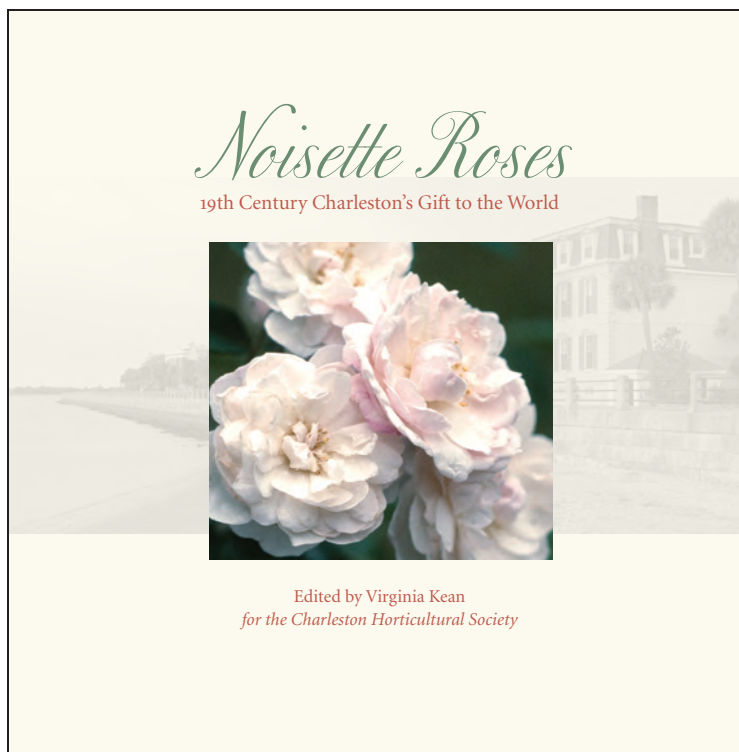
The editor is Virginia Kean, cofounder and editor in chief of *Rosa Mundi*, the journal of the Heritage Rose Foundation, which provided a grant to underwrite a portion of the printing of the book.

The co-authors include historian John Meffert on what Charleston was like in the early nineteenth century when John Champneys bred the first Noisette; the late C. Patton Hash on the history of Champneys and his Noisette rose; rose nurseryman, Gregg Lowery on the Old Noisettes and the promise they offered amateur gardeners and breeders alike in the nineteenth century; Ruth Knopf on her search for the Old Noisettes; Malcolm Manners on the genetic make-up of the Noisette; Odile Masquelier, President of *Association des Roses Anciennes en France* on the beautiful Tea-Noisettes and why they are so garden worthy; and City of Charleston horticulturist, JoAnn Breland, who oversees Charleston's Hampton Park and the Noisette Study Garden.

Contact Charleston Horticultural Society for information on ordering *Noisette Roses 19th Century Charleston's Gift to the World*. Charleston Horticultural Society ~ 46 Windermere Boulevard ~ Charleston, SC 29407; phone 843-579-9922 ~ Fax 843-579-9922 ~ www.charlestonhorticulturalsociety.org

The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession, by Andrea Wulf; Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, Hardcover, 368 pages, ISBN-13: 9780307270238; \$35

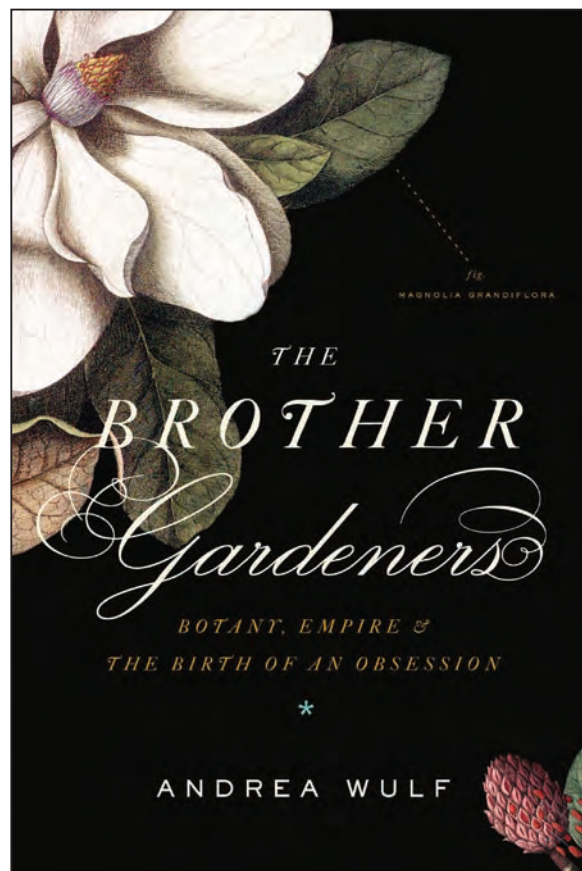
This is the fascinating story of a small group of eighteenth-century naturalists



landscape and garden forever. During the next forty years, Collinson and a handful of botany enthusiasts cultivated hundreds of American species. The Brother Gardeners follows the lives of six of these men, whose shared passion

for plants gave rise to the English love affair with gardens. In addition to Collinson and Bartram, who forged an extraordinary friendship, here are Philip Miller, author of the best-selling *Gardeners Dictionary*; the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus, whose standardized nomenclature helped bring botany to the middle classes; and Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander, who explored the strange flora of Brazil, Tahiti, New Zealand, and Australia on the greatest voyage of discovery of their time, aboard Captain Cook's Endeavour.

From the exotic blooms in Botany Bay to the royal gardens at Kew, from the streets of London to the vistas of the Appalachian Mountains, *The Brother Gardeners* paints a vivid portrait of an emerging world of knowledge and of gardening as we know it today. It is a delightful and beautifully told narrative history.



Andrea Wulf will be a speaker for the Center for Historic Plants Open House at Tufton Farm on May 23, 2009. (see Calendar on page 2 for details)

Remembering Margot Rochester, cultivator of words and gardens

By Marion St. Clair

On the dust jacket's back flap of her recently published book, we learn she was a garden columnist for twenty years and a gardener for over thirty. But there was much more to the well-lived life of my friend and mentor, Margot Rochester, who passed away after a brief illness in October.

Born in Los Angeles, Margot grew up in California and New York. A self-described "child of urbanites," she liked to say she discovered gardening in a bookstore at the University of Michigan, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts. And though she probably wouldn't have told you so, she took an M.A. and Ph.D. at the University of South Carolina.

Margot was an educator, first at Camden High School and then at Lugoff-Elgin High School, teaching advanced composition to college-bound students. For a time she worked as an administrator, developing curricula, but soon returned to the classroom. As one who often benefitted from her earnest and sincere encouragement, I wasn't surprised to find she was a long-time Beta Club sponsor.

At her Celebration of Life service I sat among her colleagues and students, and found she was as beloved and admired by them as she was by her gardening friends. One of Margot's most poignant tributes came from a former student, who wrote, "She taught me as much about grace and dignity and living earnestly as she did about English, and for that I am grateful."

Margot was especially proud of her family. Both she and her husband of 52 years, Dick, relished time with their two sons and daughters-in-law, Tom and Cindy of Cornelius, North Carolina, and Dan and Bonnie of

Wilmington. Conversations were frequently peppered with reports of her five grandchildren – Haley, Drew, Gray, Morgan, and Margot – as well as inquiries about my own loved ones. No visit was complete without a thorough appraisal of family pets, too.

I met Margot in 1993 when we undertook Master Gardener training at the same time. We became fast friends, but truth be told, Margot was friends with most

everyone. When I read a tribute in The State newspaper which said, "For Rochester, sharing her love of gardening came naturally," I recognized my friend. But it would have been just as accurate to put gardening aside and say, "For Rochester, sharing her love came naturally."

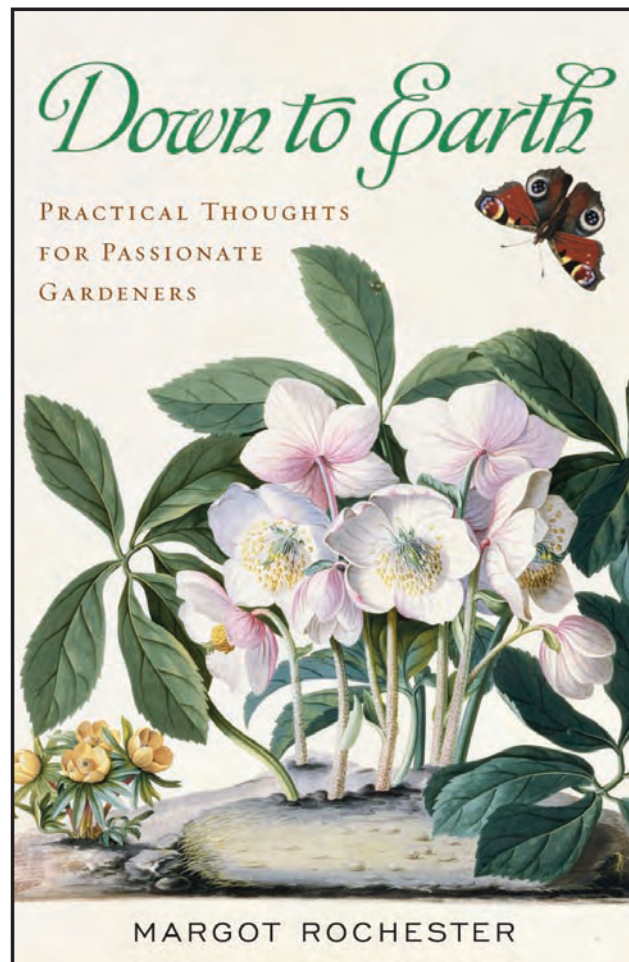
One thing was certain – any meeting, event, or trip that included Margot was bound to be fun, and I made an effort to be a part, even after I moved from the Midlands to the Upstate in 2000. Best times together included garden tours, far afield in England, Long Island, Philadelphia, and Portland, as well as those closer to home, in Richmond and Raleigh.

In *Down to Earth*, published since her passing, Margot wrote, "Good luck strikes whenever I visit a garden, even if I leave empty

handed. I have had the pleasure of seeing a garden in the company of another gardener, fine company indeed."

On occasion, when I visited the Midlands, Margot introduced me to some of her favorite gardeners and their gardens, and I did the same when she came to Greenville. I must admit, my own was not her favorite. Although we shared similar interests, Margot and I had very different tastes.

As a non-planner who loved nothing better than a landscaped packed with foliage and flowers, Margot



found my formal parterre of boxwoods and shrub roses more than a bit austere, in appearance and in plants. She was always complimentary, as was her way, but I knew in my heart she never gave up the idea that I should admire plants as much as I favor design.

In her newest book, Margot explained, "I am pretty open minded when it comes to how people garden, but shrubs sheared into rigid unnatural shapes make my teeth clench." I laughed, knowing it to be true.

However, she also asserted her belief that gardens are best when they are unique. "Let go of the rules and expectations of others," she advised. "It is the differences that keep life interesting and the garden our own."

At home in Lugoff, Margot honed earth-kind and gardener-friendly practices. She was an inveterate mulcher, using coastal Bermuda hay to eliminate weeding, reduce irrigation, and enrich her sandy soil. She devoted one corner of her backyard to nurturing wildlife, filling it with sassafras, elderberry, serviceberry, possumhaw, red cedar, and other natives, and the opposite corner for cultivating her immense circle of friends, using it as a service area to propagate plants that would fill their landscapes.

As she said, "Whatever goal you set, the garden should make you happy. Why else would you go to the trouble and expense?" And, "The moral of the story is this: never work harder than absolutely necessary...especially in the garden. Gardening should always be a labor of love."

Unfussy by nature, Margot adored plants that mixed and mingled in her borders. In the garden, her zest for life was expressed with bold colors, tall growers, and too much of almost everything. "Some folks have an overdeveloped sense of tidiness and should get over it," she pointed out.

Lucky for you and me, Margot collected these ideas and others in two books, *Earthly Delights: Gardening by the Seasons the Easy Way*, published by Taylor Trade

Publishing in 2004; and *Down to Earth: Practical Thoughts for Passionate Gardeners*, issued by the same company in January of this year.

In late September, when Margot and I (with many friends from North and South Carolina) attended the annual symposium of the Garden Writers Association in Portland, Oregon, *Down to Earth* was complete except for a final edit and she was eager to see the book jacket design. Diagnosed with pancreatic cancer within days of our return home, the jacket arrived while Margot was in the hospital, and was the source of much excitement and happiness.

When my review copy of *Down to Earth* was delivered on Christmas Eve, I knew I would find Margot's enthusiastic and generous spirit each page. I did. And comfort, too. "That is how gardening is. Nothing is permanent, not even the gardener," Margot reminded me. "We must focus on the pleasures of the moment before they (and we) move on."

Down to Earth: Practical Thoughts for Passionate Gardeners, by Margot Rochester; Taylor Trade Publishing, hardcover, 241 pages; ISBN: 158979382X, ISBN-13: 9781589793828; \$22.95

Down to Earth is a book that speaks to the soul of the passionate gardener of any experience level, exploring and detailing all the pleasures that gardeners enjoy from this hobby. Rochester encourages readers to garden for self-gratification. No hoeing, no tilling, no turning of piles. No chemical insecticides or herbicides, either. The author's goal is to encourage and enable gardeners to simplify tasks, saving time and money, while making their gardens their own. Rochester's refreshing musings and advice invite the reader to take a break, pour a cup of tea, and forge a fine and friendly relationship with a kindred spirit of gardening.

Fellowship Opportunity..... (continued from page 7)

of literary garden writing. Lawrence's garden, where she learned and reported many of her lessons, is on a modest urban lot—just 70' x 225'—in a historic neighborhood, near Wing Haven Gardens and Bird Sanctuary. It has a formal design, with five intersecting gravel paths outlining four informally mixed borders still filled with a significant number of her plants. A small woodland stands at the back of the property. In 1984, Lawrence, in declining health, moved to Maryland. Two years later, the property was privately purchased and remained in private ownership until 2008 when it was purchased by Wing Haven. Today the house and garden are on the National Register of Historic

Places and is a Mecklenburg County Historic Landmark.

The Garden Conservancy holds a conservation easement on the property, which will permanently protect the design, layout, architectural features and main plant features of the garden and house. Wing Haven will manage the garden as a living laboratory in order to continue the legacy of Elizabeth Lawrence.

The Marco Polo Stufano Garden Conservancy Fellowship is made possible by the generous contribution of Anne and Joseph McCann.



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Borough Plantation at Stateburg

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The society's membership year is from **August 1—July 31**. The membership secretary will mail renewal notices in the summer for the 2008-2009 year. Membership categories:

Benefactor	\$250
Patron	\$150
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