



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

# Magnolia

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## Old Salem's RSG&L Conference Commemorates Thirty Years

By Davyd Foard Hood, Vale, North Carolina

The 17<sup>th</sup> Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes Conference being held in Old Salem this fall, 24-26 September, marks the thirtieth anniversary of a gathering that has come to be an important biennial event for Southern gardeners, historians, plantsmen, and garden preservationists. ***“Returning to Our Roots: Planting and Replanting the Historic Southern Garden”*** celebrates the scholarship, educational goals, and valued traditions which have distinguished the sixteen preceding conferences. This year's planning committee has assembled a group of eminent speakers and a roster of presentations that reflect new research on important Southern landscapes, sources for bulbs, herbaceous and woody plants, fruits, and vegetables long favored by Southern gardeners for their public and private grounds, insights by the author of the latest publication by the Garden Club of Virginia of their appealing, influential restorations, a welcome to Oak Hill, the mansion and grounds of James Monroe, the earliest presidential estate to remain in private ownership, and the creation of “appropriate” grounds for a house in Georgia relocated to a new site.

In 1979 the first conference was held in the spring, 26-28 April, over the course of three days in a format that has worked remarkably well to the present. In 1985, the conference was moved to the autumn, and has been held during the last week of September ever since. While some events of the conference, particularly meals have varied year to year, as different venues and opportunities became available, the use of the MESDA Auditorium has been a constant. Its podium will be familiar to Peter Hatch who opens the 2009 conference with the Flora Ann Bynum Keynote Lecture. After receiving a degree from Sandhills Community College, Peter came to Old Salem where he was horticulturist until 1977, when he

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Oak Hill, Loudoun County, Virginia

Photo courtesy of Virginia Living

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# CALENDAR

**August 17-19, 2009.** Maintaining Historic Urban Parks Workshop, Presidio, San Francisco, CA, presented by the National Association for Olmsted Parks and City Parks Alliance, in partnership with The Presidio Trust and The Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, National Park Service. For more information, contact [info@naop.org](mailto:info@naop.org) or 202-223-9113.

**September 11, 2009.** Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello, Preview Events, Noon until 3:30 p.m. at Tufton Farm: This afternoon of workshops and tours will highlight the work of the Center for Historic Plants at Tufton Farm. The event at CHP is free; no registration required. Call (434) 984-9816 for additional information.

4 p.m. at Monticello: **The Heirloom Tomato: From Garden to Table:** This special event will combine a seed-saving tour in the gardens of Monticello with an illustrated lecture at the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center by author and heirloom vegetable authority **Amy Goldman**. She will celebrate the world's most beautiful fruit in all its glorious diversity. Reservations required for Monticello event; \$35 registration fee. Call (434) 984-9836 for more information or visit the festival Web site: <http://www.heritageharvestfestival.com>.

**September 12, 2009. Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello,** co-sponsored with the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, the third annual Heritage Harvest Festival at Monticello will be held on Montalto, Jefferson's "high mountain" that rises 400 feet above Monticello. The festival is a family-oriented, educational event designed to promote sustainable gardening and heirloom plants. It will highlight the efforts of nonprofit organizations promoting organic gardening, the preservation of traditional agriculture, and regional food; and will provide an array of food vendors and free samples. The festival also will include tastings, informative workshops, and talks by authorities such as Tom Burford and William Woys Weaver. \$5 per car. More information: [www.heritageharvestfestival.com](http://www.heritageharvestfestival.com).

**September 24-26, 2009. Returning to Our Roots: Planting & Replanting the Historic Southern Garden, Old Salem Museum & Gardens, Winston-Salem, NC.** 2009 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Conference on Restoring Southern Gardens & Landscapes, 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. For more details, see the lead article by Davyd Foard Hood in this issue.

Sessions will include practical information on planting and maintaining the historic garden in both private and public contexts, case studies of historic landscape restorations, and resources for heirloom and historic seeds, flowers, bulbs, trees, vegetables and native plants. In honor of the anniversary year, the popular conference plant sale will be expanded and will be available throughout the conference.

The conference will begin with afternoon guided tours of the gardens of Old Salem on Thursday, September 24, followed by an

opening reception and keynote address by Peter Hatch, Director of Gardens and Grounds at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello.

Speakers on Friday and Saturday include William Woys Weaver, Scott Kunst, William Patterson, Jim Rodgers, David C. Vernon, Margaret Page Bemiss, Will Rieley, Gayle DeLashmutt, and Sue Burgess. Moderators for the Friday and Saturday sessions will be Peggy Cornett and Davyd Foard Hood.

The conference will also include a visit to Reynolda Gardens of Wake Forest University and dinner on the grounds at Reynolda House Museum of American Art. Two photographic exhibitions will be on view during the conference: "Early Views of the Salem Landscape" and "Heroes of Horticulture," featuring culturally significant landscapes at risk. Contact [sgant@oldsalem.org](mailto:sgant@oldsalem.org).

**September 23-26, 2009.** Garden Writers Association Annual Meeting, Raleigh, NC.

**October 16-17, 2009.** The 21st Annual Southern Garden Symposium & Workshops, St. Francisville, LA. Speakers include Dr. Bill Barrick, Felder Rushing, Peggy Cornett, Tres Fromme, Margie Jenkins, Buddy Lee, Joe Smith, and Dr. Jeff Kuehny. Registration number: (225) 635-3738; <http://www.southerngardensymposium.org/>

**October 19-21, 2009.** Nationwide Cemetery Preservation Summit in Nashville, TN; sponsored by the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training and the Nashville Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission. For more information, visit [www.ncptt.nps.gov/index.php/nationwide-cemetery-preservation-summit/](http://www.ncptt.nps.gov/index.php/nationwide-cemetery-preservation-summit/).

**October 21, 2009.** Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center hosts the Inaugural Ashley Wright McIntyre Lecture Series, featuring renowned horticulturist and author Dr. William C. Welch presenting, "Sharing Southern Treasures: Friends and Flora." The 7:00 p.m. lecture will be followed by a book signing. Dr. Welch's passion, knowledge, and unselfish contributions make him a treasure for the horticulture world. Reservations are required. Call (404) 814-4150 to register or for more information visit: [www.AtlantaHistoryCenter.com](http://www.AtlantaHistoryCenter.com). For more on Bill Welch, see article in this issue.

**October 22-24, 2009.** Northern Neck of Virginia Cultural Landscape Symposium at Stratford Hall, Stratford, Virginia. Contact Ken McFarland: (804) 493-8038, ext. 1558; <http://www.stratfordhall.org/learn/education/nn.php>.

**April 30-May 2, 2010. Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society** returns to Mount Vernon, Virginia. The meeting is coordinated by the venerable Dean Norton, with Gail Griffin and Wayne Amos on the planning committee. The program includes lectures and tours in Alexandria, a paddlewheel trip on the Potomac River to Mt. Vernon, and a day of lectures and tours at George Washington's home. The Sunday bus tour includes gardens of interest in Middleburg, Virginia. Mark your calendars!



## Old Salem's RSG&L Conference.....(continued from page 17)

decamped for Monticello. He is now in his fourth decade as director of its gardens and grounds. On Saturday, 28 April 1979, conference attendees heard Peter speak on "Thomas Jefferson, Gardener." On Thursday evening, 24 September 2009—thirty years and five months later, Peter is again at the podium sharing his unique perspective and insights. "The Saviors of Monticello, 1826-1977," reflects his examination of a succession of owners, gardeners, and efforts over a century and a half from Thomas Jefferson's death until his own arrival on its fabled ground. A buffet reception will follow in MESDA's Horton Center Rotunda.

"Resources for the Historic Southern Garden" is the horticultural umbrella under which five speakers will gather Friday. Peggy Cornett, Curator of Plants at Monticello and a plantswoman who followed in Peter's footsteps from Old Salem to Charlottesville, is the moderator of these sessions. Scott Kunst, the founding proprietor of Old House Gardens, speaks of "Heirloom Bulbs for Southern Gardens: Tough, Gorgeous, and Enduring." William Patterson, the founder and owner of Roses Unlimited in Laurens, South Carolina, offers twenty-first-century gardeners many of the roses favored by their nineteenth-century ancestors that were supplied

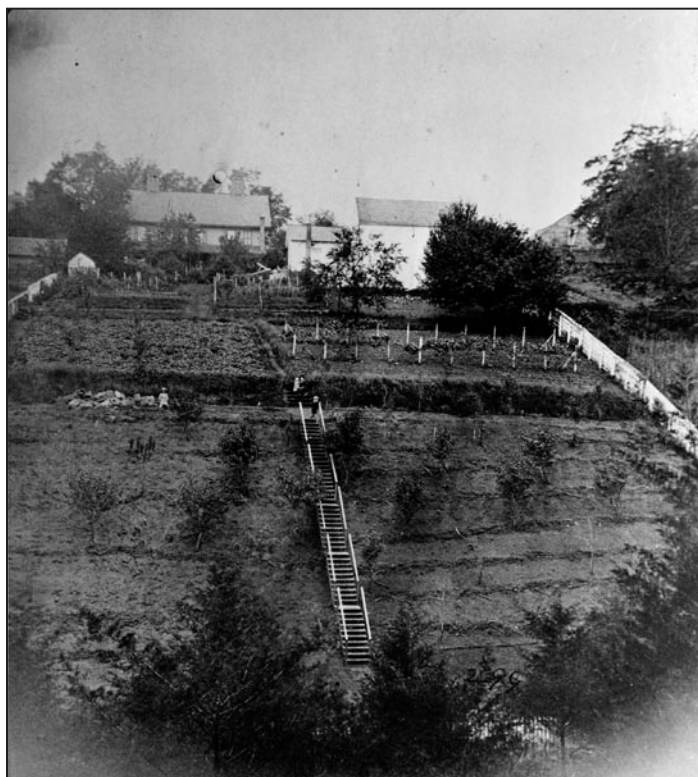
by Berckman's and Pomaria nurseries, among other important Southern sources. Those who attended the 2009 annual meeting in Camden will have enjoyed his engaging presentation there, and many carried home to their gardens the rose bushes he brought to Camden for sale. We hope he will have good stock to share with attendees in Old Salem in September, where he will be "Remembering the Past with Old Garden Roses." Jim Rodgers, of Nearly Native Nursery in Fayetteville, Georgia, concludes the morning with his views on "The Significance of the Diverse Native Flora in Early American Settlements," a subject that drew artists Mark Catesby and John Abbot and explorers John and William Bartram and

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Collection of Old Salem Museums & Gardens

This photograph, inscribed, "Lee Hendricks in Garden," shows four people posing with flowers. It is not certain if Lee Hendricks is the man standing in the background or the man sitting. His house (and presumably garden) was located at 234 Main Street in Salem.



Collection of Old Salem Museums & Gardens

The Steiner House on Church Street in Salem was built for Charles Abraham Steiner, a chairmaker. This image, looking east, shows the yard to the rear of the house with an extensive garden and stair system for descending the steep grade. An unidentified woman and two children can be seen at the top of the stairs. The Steiner House was built in 1823 and restored in 1969.



Collection of Old Salem Museums & Gardens

Dr. Henry T. Bahnson grew these remarkable lily pads in a pond behind his house located on Church Street in Salem. Thomas S. Wright, the African American man standing in the water, and his wife, Isabella, standing on the bank, were both employees of Dr. Bahnson.

# *“A Southern Oasis: Camden, South Carolina,” SGHS Annual Meeting Review*

*By Staci L. Catron, Atlanta, Georgia*

The Southern Garden History Society held its 27<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in Camden, South Carolina, April 3-5, 2009. Landscape and architectural historian, Davyd Foard Hood, chaired the meeting with a highly capable committee of Camden Garden Club members and other community supporters, including Debbie Brewer, Hope Cooper, Joan Corbin, Catherine French, Sallie Iselin, Harriet Kennaby, Judy Martin, Willard Polk, and Lisa Towell. Through lectures and tours, the 2009 annual meeting presented Camden as a Southern oasis, a community that has evolved from an eighteenth-century trade center to a winter, equestrian colony that has kept its charm and character.

## **April 3, 2009**

The opening session began at the Fine Arts Center of Kershaw County, with a warm introduction by Davyd Foard Hood, who thanked his committee for their energetic and outstanding efforts in hosting the 27<sup>th</sup> annual meeting. Hood extended a special word for committee member, Margot Rochester, a long-time Camden Master Gardener, who passed away on 28 October 2008. Next, Jeffrey R. Graham, the Mayor of Camden, welcomed the Society members to the city and officially proclaimed April 3-5, 2009 “Southern Garden History Society Weekend in Camden, South Carolina.” SGHS President, Jeff Lewis, accepted the honor on behalf of the Society.

Distinguished historian and author Walter B. Edgar presented the opening lecture, “Camden: From Trading Post to Winter Colony.” Edgar’s talk prepared attendees for their weekend in Camden by discussing the evolution of the town in its broader historic and cultural contexts. The oldest inland city in South Carolina, Camden was originally laid out in 1732 as the Fredricksburg Township when King George III ordered eleven inland townships established along South Carolina’s rivers. The site of the town of Fredricksburg was south of the current town. Settlers chose to move to higher ground to the north and the original Fredricksburg Township disappeared. In 1758, Joseph Kershaw of England, who had extensive ties to the Quaker trade community in Philadelphia, came to the area, established a store, and renamed the town Pine Tree Hill. By the mid-1760s, it became the inland trade center in the colony. By 1768, the township was renamed Camden in honor of Lord Camden (Charles Pratt), a champion of colonial rights in the British parliament. The American



*SGHS members arrive at Millford, where Dick Jennette welcomed us.*

Revolution struck Charleston, South Carolina in May 1780, and the city fell to the British. Lord Cornwallis and his troops established the primary British supply post for the Southern campaign in Camden shortly thereafter. After significant battles in and near Camden, the war moved into northern South Carolina and then into North Carolina. Following the American Revolution, early nineteenth-century Camden lost its place as the primary inland trade area, which became focused in Columbia. The production of upland cotton kept the Camden area prosperous for white planters and merchants. The money made from cotton afforded the building of elaborate homes, such as Wisdom Hall and Mulberry Plantation. The cotton boom ended in Camden by 1819. Local newspapers reported citizens migrating from Camden in the mid-1830s. Still, by 1860, Camden was the fourth largest town in South Carolina with a population of approximately 1,600. During the Civil War, over eighty percent of the white male population of Camden enlisted in the Confederate army. In February 1865, General Sherman and Union troops marched on Camden, destroying stores, rail-lines, and some homes. By the 1880s, Camden entered its “Gilded Age,” boasting an opera house, three newspapers, a grade school, a reading club, several bands, and an amateur baseball association. Due to endorsements of Camden’s healthy climate and superior fishing and hunting, the town became a winter retreat for well-to-do Northern families. Camden soon became known for its extensive equestrian activities. The winter colony survived well into the early twentieth century.

In preparation for the tours of the weekend, restoration architect and preservationist J. Stephen Smith provided an architectural overview of Camden. Over sixty sites



in Camden pre-date 1865 and late nineteenth-century and twentieth-century architectural treasures are extensive in the town as well. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Camden Historic District reflects the town's heritage from the Revolutionary War era, the antebellum period, and the winter colony of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Smith showed dozens of examples of architectural gems from Federal and Greek Revival styles to Queen Anne, Mission Revival, Tudor Revival, Neo-Gothic, and others. Examples given included: the John Craven house (c. 1786); the Bradley House (c. 1800); the Douglas-Reed House (c. 1811); the Bonds Conway House (c. 1812); the Bishop Davis House (c. 1820); Bethesda Presbyterian Church (1822); the Price House (c. 1830); Tanglewood (c. 1831); the Cunningham House (c. 1842); the Old Market and Courthouse (Federal style in 1836; modified to Greek Revival-style in 1847); Holly Hedge (c. 1842); Bloomsbury (c. 1850); The Hobkirk Inn (c. 1850); The Sycamores (c. 1850); Temple Bethel (c. 1903); and Carnegie Library (1915), to name but some.

Afternoon walking tours highlighted Camden's documented garden history. The tours included four significant sites: Duffields, Holly Hedge, The Sycamores, and Witwer Garden.

Nineteenth-century high-style landscape traditions in Camden are represented by Holly Hedge, the antebellum estate of William E. Johnson (1797-1871) located on a portion of the Hobkirk Hill Revolutionary battle site. Johnson built the elaborate Greek Revival-style raised cottage (c. 1842) with columned piazzas on both the front and rear of the house. Johnson and his wife, Mary Cunningham Brown Hodges Johnson, planned the elaborate gardens at Holly Hedge including double rows of holly hedges, terraces, ornamental lakes, and an extensive collection of trees, shrubs, and other plants brought up from Charleston on flatboats. This celebrated historic garden is included in *Gardens of Colony and State, Volume II* compiled and published by the Garden Club of America (1931-1934) as well as E. T. H. Shaffer's *Carolina Gardens* (1937). The estate remained in the Johnson family for three generations until it was sold to Frank Kellogg Bull in 1901. In 1927, it was sold to Ernest Leroy Woodward and

then later acquired by Marion DuPont Scott, remaining in the DuPont family until 1990 when the property was subdivided into ten lots. In 1991, Sally and Kendall Ranck purchased 4.99 acres comprising the house, its dependencies, and the gardens and grounds. The Rancks restored the buildings at Holly Hedge and rehabilitated the grounds following damage by Hurricane Hugo. In 2004, the estate was sold to the current owners and stewards, Pam and Ben Schreiner, who donated the development rights for Holly Hedge grounds to the Kershaw County Historical Society in 2007.

Like many significant historic sites in Camden, The Sycamores shows the influence of successive generations on the appearance of the house and gardens. The Greek Revival-style house (c. 1850) was built for Alexander Johnson and Sarah J. Perkins Johnson. Johnson followed the example of his brother at Holly Hedge, siting his house a good distance from the street to make the grand home the focal point of a vista across a deep lawn. Following the Johnson ownership, the property passed

through two subsequent families until acquired by the Boykin family who held the estate from 1869 to 1911. Although the grounds at The Sycamores still contain nineteenth-century plantings, the main landscape features date to the ownership of Henry Plimpton Kendall, who purchased the property in 1924 and had the site as a winter residence for his family until his death in 1959. In addition to altering the interior of the main house as well as refitting and expanding numerous outbuildings on the property, the Kendalls hired a landscape architect to make improvements to the spacious grounds. Local tradition attributes the design work to the notable landscape architectural firm of Innocenti & Webel. Although the connection of this firm to the 1920s garden design remains to be proven, it is clear that a professional arranged the features of this garden. As described by Davyd Foard Hood: "The Fair Street frontage is lined by chain-lined bollards that define the extent of its 500-plus feet. The entrance, marked by ivy-covered piers, is aligned with the house's front door and gives onto the circular gravel drive lined with cherry laurel. This evergreen circlet is bisected by an axial walk, also lined with cherry laurel that reinforces the geometry

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*Wisteria in full bloom at Millford*



## A Southern Oasis.....(continued from page 5)

of the design in front of the wisteria-draped portico. On the south side of the house, the half circle reappears as a grass-covered lawn, also enframed by an evergreen border. Here, another axial walk lined with dense, aged azaleas leads south to a point near the south edge of the property where the walk probably terminated with a now-lost garden ornament or feature. At the back of the house a strict geometry gives way for a horseshoe-shaped walk lined with small-leaf privet. It links the house with a fenced paddock and continues in its arc to the service area. These developed features are enframed on the north and south by tree-shaded expanses that naturally insulate this landmark house and its gardens within its larger historic neighborhood."

A notable twentieth-century garden in Camden, Duffields has been influenced by three owners: Henry McLeod, who built the winter residence in 1926 on land that was original part of the Holly Hedge estate; Helen Harman, an early member of the American Camellia Society who cultivated an important camellia collection on the property from 1937 to the late 1950s; and the current owners, Polly and Nicholas Lampshire, who have worked diligently since 1992 to reclaim the gardens created by Harmon. Due to the dedication and efforts of the Lampshires, over 100 Camellias (*Camellia japonica*, *Camellia sasanqua*, and *Camellia reticulata*) now thrive at Duffields.

Like the other sites on the afternoon walking tour, the Witwer Garden is located in the Camden Historic District. Tucked into the former grounds of antebellum

Fairhaven, the contemporary Witwer garden contains hedges and other mature plantings dating to the ownership of the property by Elizabeth and T. Benthall Marshall in the 1970s. The Marshalls hired local nurseryman John Lindsay (1930-2008) to replant the grounds. In the late 1970s, the Marshalls sold Fairhaven to Mary and John Tatum. At this juncture, the cottage on the property was legally set apart on a separate lot from the antebellum plain-style house and immediate grounds of Fairhaven. In 1989, this cottage and garden were sold to Dr. Jeffery Witwer, a veterinarian who originally came to Camden in 1978 to work for members of the equestrian colony who brought their horses to the area for winter. Witwer became a year-round resident in Camden in 1992. Since then, he has developed an urban woodland garden on the property, which includes a pond, an eight-foot waterfall, and a conservatory.

On Friday evening Debbie and Thomas Brewer graciously hosted drinks and dinner at The Terraces at Plane Hill Plantation, located nine miles south of Camden. The historic site was once the home of Alexander Hamilton Boykin (1815-1866) and his wife, Sara Jones Desaussure Boykin. In the late 1830s, the Boykins laid out a terraced garden on the east side of the house. The garden was long neglected following the ownership of the property by Charlotte de Macklot Thompson in the early twentieth century. Today, the Brewers are working to reclaim the garden from years of neglect and rampant overgrowth. In 2008, they discovered an original plant list documenting purchases of A. H. Boykin dated 1847 in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries. Due to the Brewer's stewardship, this significant historic garden is being restored.



Texas members Jayme Ponder and Mary Anne Pickens



Staci Catron and Kathleen Perilloux



**April 4, 2009**

Returning to the Fine Arts Center, Saturday morning featured a series of four presentations and the Southern Garden History Society business meeting. Marty Daniels (a great-great-granddaughter of Mary Boykin Chesnut's sister, Mrs. David R. Williams II) presented the opening lecture about one of Camden's most famous citizens, Mary Bokyin Miller Chesnut (1823-1886), and her home, Mulberry. *Mary Chesnut's Civil War*, edited by C. Vann Woodward and published in 1981 by Yale University Press, won the Pulitzer Prize for History in 1982. Her book is valued as a rich historical source for scholars in American history, providing great insight into the American Civil War and her connections to Southern society, as the wife of James Chesnut III, who served the Confederacy as an aide to President Jefferson Davis. Daniels explained that "Mulberry Plantation represents a living thread in the fabric of Southern history and the history of America." Established in the 1760s, Mulberry has been owned by the same family for over 250 years—descendants of the Chesnuts and Williams families. Located about three miles south of Camden, Mulberry is on the east bank of the Wateree River and is a National Historic Landmark. 4,100 acres of the site are included within the National Historic Landmark boundaries. The main plantation house was constructed about 1820 and is a significant example of Federal style architecture (with Adamesque interior features) in the Southeast. Several contributing outbuildings also remain on the site. Today,



*Annual Meeting chair Davyd Foard Hood during Saturday afternoon walking tours*

the area closest to the house contains a manicured lawn planted with a variety of flowering bushes and trees. During the nineteenth century, an allée of oak trees led from the front of the main house to Highland Field to the south. Although none of the original oak trees in the allée survive today, it has been maintained over the years by replacement with newer oaks. A formal garden is located directly southwest of the main house. Other plants on the property include magnolias, laurels, mulberries, live oaks, pines, various fruit trees, azaleas, and camellias. The larger property consists of large forests of hardwood trees (Overcup Oaks, American Elms, Water Elms, and many others) along creeks, the river, and wetlands. As Daniels explained, the arbors of Mulberry hold a diverse collection of plant species, of which over 290 have been identified as threatened, endangered, or otherwise noteworthy. For example, a new species of Trillium was discovered recently at Mulberry. The late nineteenth century was a difficult period for Mulberry and the property was even abandoned for about thirty years. In 1910, David R. Williams III (great-grandson of Colonel James Chesnut II) and his wife, Ellen Clarke Manning Williams, began the restoration of Mulberry. In 1928, the next owners—David R. William IV and his wife, Martha Hill Williams—began their passionate effort to locate and replace Mulberry's furniture, books, and portraits that had been lost due to the Civil War. In the 1930s, the ownership of Mulberry passed to the family corporation and today four generations descending from Martha and David Williams are the active stewards of the site. In 2005, the family completed the execution of a conservation easement on the plantation with Ducks Unlimited, the world's leader in wetlands and waterfowl conservation. The easement was designed with restrictions that will not allow residential or commercial development in the areas of Mulberry that are historic sites. Additional restrictions have been placed upon harvesting hardwood forests and disturbing wetland

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*James Everett Kibler, speaker*

## *A Southern Oasis..... (continued from page 7)*

areas to protect them in perpetuity.

Next, James Everett Kibler, author of *Our Fathers' Fields: A Southern Story* (1998), presented a paper on "Upcountry Garden Sophistication: The Evidence of Pomaria Nurseries." Born in Newbury, South Carolina in 1815, William Summer established Pomaria Nurseries in Pomaria, South Carolina in 1840. Pomaria Nurseries became one of the most successful and well-known nurseries in the Southeast region during the antebellum period. Pomaria offered many varieties of fruit trees, natives, and exotics. Pomaria also specialized in roses, offering over 800 varieties. Fortunately, many seed catalogs and plant order ledgers still exist from Pomaria Nurseries. From these primary documents, Kibler explained that notable citizens of Camden ordered myriad plants from Pomaria during the antebellum period indicating the importance of sophisticated ornamental gardening in the area. From the ledgers in the 1840s to the 1860s, Kibler's research showed that the most frequently ordered plant in the upcountry and midcountry in South Carolina was *Magnolia grandiflora*. The second most popular was Deodar Cedar. Other favorites included Cedar of Lebanon, ginkgo, Norway spruce, mock orange, gardenia, loquat, boxwood, viburnum, mahonia, banana shrub, and roses.

Next, R. Austin Jenkins, Executive Director of the Katawba Valley Land Trust, highlighted the native flora of the Camden area. The Katawba Valley Land Trust is "a nonprofit, private conservation organization dedicated to the protection of natural resources, open lands, waters, historic resources, and vistas of aesthetic value ..." The primary focus of the Land Trust is Lancaster and Chester Counties, although the organization does work in other areas of South Carolina. Jenkins discussed the conservation efforts to salvage the native plant communities in the Camden area. He explained that there are various ecoregions in South Carolina. Camden belongs to the Sandhills ecoregion, an area of primarily coarse sediments, which is the inland portion of the coastal plain bordering the fall line. This sandy soil is one major reason horses do well in Camden as sandy soil is easier on the horses' joints than muddy land. The flora, of course, reflects adaptations to the Sandhills ecoregion. The sands have created an environment that supports a distinctive type of vegetation dominated by Longleaf pines (*Pinus palustris*) and Turkey oaks (*Quercus cerris*). Through efforts of groups such as the Katawba Valley Land Trust, these significant environs are being protected.

William "Bill" Patterson, the founder of Roses Unlimited, gave the final presentation of the morning. Patterson began growing roses found in his great-grandmother's garden while in grammar school. Due to

his passion for roses, he established Roses Unlimited, a major Southern grower of heirloom roses. Located in Laurens, South Carolina, Roses Unlimited offers over 1,200 varieties of roses and is the recipient of Bronze and Silver Medals from the American Rose Society. Patterson highlighted numerous heirloom roses during his talk. He also brought varieties for sale to attendees.

The morning session concluded with the Southern Garden History Society business meeting, led by Society President, Jeff Lewis. Lewis expressed his gratitude to Davyd Foard Hood and his host committee for an exceptional meeting. He then thanked the audience for attending and for supporting the efforts of the Society. Lewis pointed out that the Society's membership has declined in the past two years. He asked each member to enlist at least one new member to the Society, suggesting the purchase of memberships as gifts for birthday or holiday presents. Lewis also acknowledged the loss of longtime member and stalwart of the Society, Florence Griffin of Atlanta, in August 2008. Lewis then invited Patti McGee to the stage to discuss the status of the Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden in Charlotte, North Carolina. In 2008, the Wing Haven Foundation purchased the site from then owner and steward, Lindie Wilson, and The Garden Conservancy was granted a conservation easement for the property. Now, the goal is to bring awareness to the importance of the significant gardens of the two Elizabeths: Elizabeth Lawrence, Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden, and Elizabeth Clarkson, Winghaven Gardens and Bird Sanctuary. Next, Wayne Amos gave an overview of the fascinating offerings for the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Society at Mount



*Lynn and Jim Cothran with Patti McGee*



Vernon, April 30-May 2, 2010. Next, Lewis recognized the important work of Peggy Cornett, editor of the Society's publication, *Magnolia*. The business meeting concluded with the election of two new Board members: Jane Baber White of Lynchburg, Virginia and Linda Askey of Birmingham, Alabama.

Attendees then departed the Fine Arts Center for a visit to Millynn, a seasonal home built by Alice Flynn Milliken in 1954 that is now the residence of her grandson, Victor Strauss. A notable local architect, John Richard, designed the home. Millynn occupies acreage on the south side of Kirkwood Lane that once was part of the grounds of Horse Branch Hall. Strauss engaged Society member, Sallie Iselin, to renew the grounds of Millynn. Strauss kindly hosted the attendees for a delightful lunch on the south terrace of the site, overlooking a sweeping lawn leading to a pond.

Afternoon walking tours included the gardens and grounds of Horse Branch Hall and Kirkwood Common. Attendees also had the opportunity to view from a distance the historic property of Kamschatka. Like Kamschatka, Horse Branch Hall boasts an imposing antebellum frame house. Davyd Foard Hood describes it by stating: "Horse Branch Hall's main one-and-a-half story block is elevated on a full ground level. Its five-bay façade, looking south to Kirkwood Lane, is distinguished by a two-story portico which projects in front of the galleried porch with its double flight of steps." Isabel Scotta McRae built Horse Branch Hall in the Greek Revival-style in the early 1840s. The estate also has a stepped terraced garden, descending south to Kirkwood Lane. The design of the terraced grounds is attributed to John McRae, Isabel's cousin whom she married. The structure of the design is extant. The property remained in the McRae family until it was sold in 1901 to E. E. Mandeville. The property changed owners again in 1913 when sold to Ralph N. Ellis and again in 1932 when sold to Ella Moore Belcher. Belcher, the daughter of paint manufacturer Benjamin Moore, occupied Horse Branch Hall as a winter estate until 1947. Belcher sold the estate's acreage on the south side of Kirkwood Lane to W. R. Bonsal. The acreage on the north side, the main house, and outbuildings were sold to Warren L. Smith. Horse Branch Hall passed through many owners over the coming decades. Currently, the

home is owned by Kathleen and Braxton Comer and contains almost seven acres.

Another interesting spot on the afternoon tours was Kirkwood Common. Although not one of the original public spaces in the 1798 Plan of Camden, this city park is significant due to its location and a battle fought near the site. It is situated at the southeastern end of Hobkirk's Hill, a major battle of the American

Revolutionary War fought on April 15, 1781. On that day, General Nathaniel Greene and an American army of approximately 1,400 soldiers engaged 950 British soldiers, led by Lord Francis Rawdon. The British victory was only tactical and shortly thereafter, they evacuated Camden. Throughout the expansion of the Kirkwood area since the early nineteenth century, many historic houses have been demolished but Kirkwood Common has remained relatively intact. In 1953, over four acres were added to the park as a gift of



*Group photo during lunch at Millynn, the home of Victor Bradford Strauss Jr.*

Mr. and Mrs. William F. Buckley. Covering over twenty acres, the Common is maintained as a natural woodland park for the community to enjoy due to the efforts of the Parks and Streets Commission and the city's Public Works Department.

Saturday concluded with cocktails and an elaborate dinner on the grounds of the famous National Steeplechase Museum, the only museum in the country dedicated to the horses, trainers, owners, riders, and races, which tell the intriguing story of American Steeple-chasing.

#### **April 5, 2009**

The Sunday bus tour offered attendees the rare opportunity to visit three of South Carolina's most significant plantations, which are all National Historic Landmarks, as well as the nationally-renowned topiary garden of Pearl Fryar. The first stop of the day was Mulberry Plantation, the legendary home of Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut, described in detail earlier in this review. Attendees were greeted by Marty Daniels and allowed to view the interior of the house as well as its stunning architecture and grounds.

Next, attendees journeyed to one of the greatest plantation houses in South Carolina—Millford. Built

*(continued on page 10)*



## *A Southern Oasis.....(continued from page 9)*

between 1839-1841, Millford is considered to be the finest example of Greek Revival residential architecture in the South. The estate was originally home to John Laurence Manning (1816-1889), a governor of South Carolina, and his wife, Susan Frances Hampton. Located in a remote section of rural South Carolina, the grandeur of the estate seems to have risen from nowhere. The main house has six massive fluted Corinthian columns, floor-length windows, and a domed rotunda enclosing a circular staircase. Most of the original furniture, ordered from the New York firm of Duncan Phyfe and Son in 1841 and 1842, still remains. Live oaks, magnolias, expansive green lawns, and formal gardens surround the grand home as well as numerous well-preserved outbuildings, including a colonnaded stable, a spring house, a water tower, and a porter's lodge. The Manning family owned Millford until 1902 when it was sold to Mary Clark Thompson of New York. The property remained in the Clark family until the plantation and surrounding 400 acres was sold to Richard Hampton Jenrette in 1992. Jenrette has conducted an

extensive restoration of the main house and outbuildings, and has also overseen the replanting of its gardens and grounds. Jenrette selflessly hosted the attendees for a lovely lunch on the stunning property on his birthday.

The following sites on the tour included the Church of the Holy Cross and its neighbor, the Borough Plantation. Also a National Historic Landmark, the Church of the Holy Cross is a Gothic Revival-style structure dating to the early 1850s and designed by Charleston architect Edward C. Jones. Joel Poinsett, for whom the poinsettia is named, is buried in the church's cemetery. The Borough Plantation is one of the great cultural landscapes of the Southeast and the nation. Designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1988, the



*Mackenzie Sholtz leads tour of The Borough House gardens*



*Cemetery gate at Church of the Holy Cross, Stateburg*

plantation still consists of several thousand acres. Like Mulberry, the historic site has remained in the ownership of the same family—the descendants of Mrs. Thomas Hooper's niece. Mackenzie Sholtz kindly gave attendees an historical overview of the plantation. The Federal-style main house and extensive outbuildings are the largest collection of *pise de terre* (rammed earth) buildings existing in the United States. The gardens and grounds include plantings dating to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The final stop on Sunday's excursion was Bishopville, South Carolina, and the magnificent twentieth-century topiary garden of Pearl Fryar. With no formal horticultural training but possessing an artistic eye and a natural gift for making things grow, Fryar began creating his sculptures from plants in 1984. Fryar graciously led attendees on a fascinating, indeed magical, tour of his otherworldly garden. Today, Fryar's garden is a project of The Garden Conservancy and has its own support group, Friends of Pearl Fryar's Topiary Garden. *(Photos contributed by Peggy Cornett, Ben Page and Ed Shull.)*



*Pearl Fryar in the garden with SGHS tour*



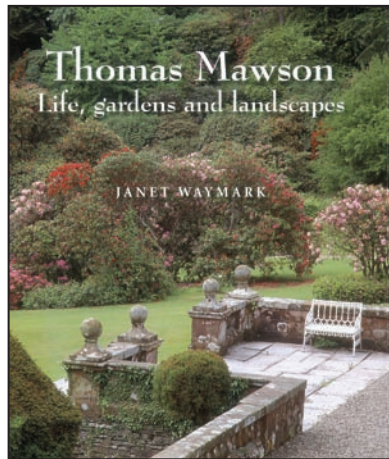
# Book Reviews

**Thomas Mawson: Life, Gardens and Landscapes**, by Janet Waymark, Frances Lincoln, 240 pages, hardcover, 2009, ISBN-10: 0711225954

Fashions in garden and landscape history have evolved both through time and held perennial interest in much the same way that styles of gardening and landscape design have been taken up for their period while other traditions in garden-making appear timeless in their repetition and continuance. In the closing decades of the twentieth century the interest in Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932), in her own right, and in her collaborations with Edwin Lutyens absorbed writers, publishers, readers, and gardeners alike. If I had any degree of skill with Googling, or pressed a friend into service, I could identify with certainty the large number of articles, books, lectures, and presentations devoted to Miss Jekyll and her gardens and the reprints of her books and writings that appeared from the 1970s into the 2000s. The figure would amaze no doubt.

Fortunately, the attention focused on Gertrude Jekyll has encouraged, through time, an appreciation of other garden makers and landscape architects working in England alongside her as equals or in other capacities in the early twentieth century. The recent work on Norah Lindsay, reviewed in these pages, is one such book. Another is the monograph on the remarkably beautiful work of Harold Ainsworth Peto (1854-1933). Now, from the presses of Frances Lincoln, comes a monograph on another great garden maker and landscape designer of the turn of the century: *Thomas Mawson: Life, Gardens and Landscapes*.

In this country, and here in the South, few, perhaps, will easily recognize his name. But Thomas Hayton Mawson (1861-1933) was a remarkable figure in English garden design, particularly in the fevered period from about 1890 to World War I. The gardens he designed for his first clients led him to others, and yet other gardens flowed from his genius through the years, numbering almost 200. The many self-made men of the time were his clients as were members of the English gentry and aristocracy. And so, too, was Queen Alexandra (1844-1925), the wife of the king who gave his name to the era,



a style, and a manner of living. In 1908 Thomas Mawson was engaged on the gardens of Hvidøre, in Copenhagen, a retreat shared by the wife of Edward VII and her younger sister Marie (1847-1928), the Dowager Czarina of Russia and the mother of Nicholas II.

Hvidøre was the fourth of his “foreign” commissions, a roster of work which included Andrew Carnegie, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and King Constantine of Greece as clients. This list included two projects in the United States. The first of the two, and, in fact, Mawson’s first work outside the United Kingdom, were the gardens and grounds of Brooklandwood, outside Baltimore, in the Green Spring Valley. Brooklandwood was a late eighteenth-century Carroll family estate that eventually comprised 1,792 acres. In 1846 it was acquired by George Brown of Baltimore’s Alexander Brown and Sons banking house, and in 1902 it passed from his grandson George Brown to Henry Carroll Brown (1874-1958), his great-grandson, who became Thomas Mawson’s client. Mawson created an elegant new entrance and approach to the mansion, with handsome lodges and entrance gates by his protégé Dan Gibson (1865-1907), enhanced the grounds, and created gardens that the Browns would enjoy only until 1911. Mrs. Brown died on 29 April 1911, and Brooklandwood was leased that year and sold in 1916. In 1952 the mansion and the immediate thirty-nine acres became the campus of St. Paul’s School, an Episcopal boys’ school. In about 1908 Thomas Mawson was engaged on the design of the landscape and gardens of Bennett Cottage at Old Westbury, Long Island, for Mrs. George Rose, where he was working until 1912. That house and its garden are lost.

The fact that there were but two residential projects in the United States in a career that began in 1885 might suggest that Thomas Mawson’s influence on American garden design was minor. That, however, was surely not the situation at all. Thomas Mawson was in the United



The illustration of Dan Gibson’s lodges at Brooklandwood, drawn by Robert Atkinson after Gibson’s death in 1907, featured in *The Studio* in the same year. It was a chapter opener in the 5th edition of *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, p. 69.

## Book Reviews.....(continued from page 11)

States for some three weeks in 1905 in association with the Brooklandwood work, here also consulting with the Roses, and in 1910 he came on a lecture tour during which he spoke at Harvard, Cornell, and Yale universities and in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Richmond, and Chicago. He visited the Olmsted brothers' office in Brookline on that trip, and he returned to this country in 1911 to attend the National Conference on City Planning and again in 1917-1918. Thomas Mawson's influence was not just through lectures and these two well-placed clients but more so through his seminal, iconic book. *The Art and Craft of Garden Making* was published by Batsford in 1900. The first printing sold out quickly and a second edition appeared in 1901. A third edition was issued in 1907, and a fourth came off the Batsford presses in 1912. Few garden books of real worth had enjoyed such popularity up to that time, and few would for some years to come. Even with the catastrophic effects of World War I on life, society, and finance, and the acknowledged end of Edwardian life, a fifth edition of *The Art And Craft Of Garden Making* appeared in 1926. Many Americans of the means and station to have employed Thomas Mawson or one of his American contemporaries could have purchased copies of his book abroad, or from booksellers in New York, Boston, or Philadelphia. But such effort was not necessary. Charles Scribners' Sons simultaneously published the first edition of *The Art and Craft of Garden Making* in New York in 1900 and the successive editions of 1901, 1907, 1912, and 1926.

The book immediately found its way into the hands of early twentieth-century American garden makers. At this distance, and for the purposes of this review, it would be difficult to establish the specific influences of Thomas Mawson and *The Art and Craft of Garden Making* on American landscape gardening. However, the book's appealing design, well-chosen illustrations including the plans of his own 1898 house and office, The Corbels at Heathside, Windermere, in the Lake District, and that of Graythwaite Hall, his first fully-resolved, influential design, one made for Colonel Thomas Myles Sandys (d. 1912) to whom the first three editions of the book were dedicated, and its straightforward language attracted a wide readership.

The tone of the book was new, if not revolutionary. Thomas Mawson had found his own design path through the competing views represented by William Robinson and natural gardening on the one hand and the classical formality espoused by Reginald Blomfield at the opposite pole. He adopted features of both schools in his particular synthesis, crafting "a landscape of his own making." Having worked as a draughtsman in an architectural office and as a young plantsman in the family nursery,

Thomas Mawson utilized architectural structure and plants in almost equal measure. His favored use of stone for retaining and garden walls, walks, stairs, pergolas, steps, and other enhancements was masterful. This is seen to advantage at several estates in the new biography, and most visibly at Graythwaite Hall where he excavated around the house and gave it an "elevated" presence above and behind a stone retaining wall capped by an elegant classical balustrade, at Rydal Hall, Wood House, and at the achingly beautiful Tirley Garth, Cheshire, where he cooperated with architect Charles Edward Mallows (1864-1915).

When he turned to writing *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, Thomas Mawson combined theoretical observation with practical guidance in their appropriate measure, in clear language easily understood by readers, whether male or female, businessman or socialite. In short he sought to educate prospective clients about the process of garden making and how and why men --and women--such as himself, with professional skills and knowledge, were best suited to implement their wishes. In his arguments for the recognition of garden design as art, he elevated gardens above the products of trade and convention, and encouraged an appreciation of those who expertly combined "art" and "craft" in the making of gardens whether they called themselves garden designers, landscape architects, or landscape gardeners.

In *Thomas Mawson: Life, Gardens And Landscapes*, Janet Waymark makes an important, intelligent, and sympathetic first step in appraising the life and career of a remarkable talent. I use the term "first step" without any hint of criticism. From the opening pages, one comes to understand the rich background, breadth of experience, and important family associations that both informed and facilitated Thomas Mawson's work as a garden designer, civic planner, park creator, and author. His was a life too big for these 240 pages. Thomas Mawson's career was greatly enhanced by family assistance from its first years in the Lake District through his diagnosis with Parkinson's disease in 1923, and a gradual slowing. Beginning with the establishment of Mawson Brothers Nursery in 1885 with his younger siblings, Robert (1864-1910) and Isaac (1867-1901), he worked largely as a designer while his brothers tended the large nursery, a concern that installed and planted his designs and offered a full stock to the retail trade.

Following Robert Mawson's death in 1910 Mawson Brothers was reorganized as Lakeland Nursery in 1912. In 1911 Thomas Mawson brought his eldest son Edward Prentice Mawson (1885-1954) into the firm as a partner, and John William Mawson (1886-1964), the second son, came into the office as well. These actions occurred



as part of the evolving expansion of the firm. Thomas Mawson had taken talented men as associates into the office, through the years, and in 1901, with ever increasing travel by train to job sites, he opened an office in London in Conduit Street. In 1912 Mawson and Sons opened a second London office in Belgrave Chambers in Victoria Street, where they were close to a host of allied offices and business houses whose goods and services they utilized in their own work.

Thomas Hayton Mawson had a long and distinguished career. Janet Waymark addresses his work as a garden maker, as a park creator, as an author, and as a civic planner, giving emphasis to his work in garden and estate design. Mawson had strong professional interests in town planning, and he expressed his precepts in a second book, *Civic Art*, published in 1911. But in this field and these projects where he was required to answer competitive municipal interests he found, as had Frederick Law Olmsted, that his clients all too often lacked a necessary vision and were unwilling to make the critical long-term investments required for civic greatness. His extensive professional and financial commitments to work in both Canada and Greece failed to find reward. Nevertheless, facing progressive debilitation in the mid 1920s, he looked back with a profound personal satisfaction on his life's work, an achievement he celebrated in his autobiography, *The Life and Work of an English Landscape Architect*, published in 1927. Janet Waymark honors that achievement anew in *Thomas Mawson: Life, Gardens and Landscapes*. However, the place of *The Art and Craft of Garden Making* in English—and American—garden history awaits its scholar.

Davyd Foard Hood  
Isinglass  
Vale, North Carolina

***A Legacy in Bloom: Celebrating a Century of Gardens at the Cummer***, by Judith B. Tankard, photographs by Mick Hales, Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, publisher, November 2008, hardcover, ISBN-10: 0915135140

A copy of *A Legacy In Bloom: Celebrating a Century of Gardens at the Cummer*, published in 2008 by the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, Jacksonville, Florida, arrived



last year. The gardens that are the subject of this book were designed by several of the nation's distinguished landscape architects and firms, and they ornamented the extensive grounds of the Cummer family compound aligned on Riverside Avenue along the bank of St. Johns River. In 1903 when Ossian Cole Simonds prepared an overall plan for the compound, the Greek Revival-style residence (#801) of Wellington Wilson Cummer (1846-1909) and his wife Ada (1853-1929) and an English Manorial-style house (#829) built by their son, Arthur Gerrish Cummer (1873-1943), and his wife Ninah (1875-1958) stood on the property. Four years later Waldo Emerson Cummer (1875-1936) and his wife Clara (18\_\_-1958) erected an adjoining Spanish Mission-style house at 761 Riverside Avenue. The brothers' houses flanked that of their parents. The wealth of the three couples came from the Cummer Lumber Company of Florida that was organized in 1896 and prospered as the state's vast stands of virgin cypress and pine were felled and milled. The Cummers came to Florida from Michigan, one base of a family lumber barony that began in Canada and moved south across North America. There was certain logic in the hiring of Ossian Cole Simonds (1855-1932), a Michigan-born landscape gardener who had established his office in Chicago.

Garden historian and SGHS-member Judith Tankard begins her essay, "History of the Gardens," with Simonds' overall layout for the family grounds which incorporated important existing stands of live oaks and other native trees and shrubs with new massed plantings in an enhanced naturalistic landscape. The lush setting crafted by Simonds soon became the physical canvas on which the three Cummer wives began their garden-making. The gardens made by the senior Mrs. Cummer were eventually eclipsed by those created by her two daughters-in-law. Arthur and Ninah Cummer engaged the Philadelphia firm of Thomas Meehan and Sons in 1910 for the design of a formal, axial flower garden that was first known as the Wisteria Garden. Its principal feature was a pergola of cypress beams, supporting the wisteria, which framed views of the St. Johns River.

Next, in 1922, Ninah Cummer sought the advice of the Olmsted Brothers firm, then headed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., in regard to a wall fountain she wanted to add as the focus of a cross-axis in the Wisteria Garden. In the event she and Olmsted did not reconcile their views on the fountain, and she turned instead to the Pennsylvania workshop of William R. Mercer Jr. for an elegant mosaic-inlaid fountain that remains in place to the present. The character of the Wisteria Garden—and its name—were changed after Ninah Cummer attended a lecture on azaleas by Dr. H. Harold Hume, the as-yet little heralded horticulturist who was then the owner/proprietor of Glen Saint Mary Nurseries in suburban Jacksonville. Azaleas

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## Book Reviews.....(continued from page 13)

were planted in the Wisteria Garden, soon to be called the Azalea Garden, and throughout the Cummer property. Photographs of Ninah Cummer's garden, which had appeared in the Glen Saint Mary catalogues, also appeared in Dr. Hume's *Gardening in the Lower South* in 1929. Meanwhile, documentary photographs by the J. Horace McFarland Company of Waldo and Clara Cummer's grounds illustrate the elegant gardens they had made around their house.

The death of Ada Gerrish Cummer in 1929 precipitated garden making on a new, larger scale in the 1930s by Ninah and Clara Cummer. In 1931 her house was demolished and its grounds at the heart of the family compound were divided between her children, her two sons who lived on either side of 801 Riverside Avenue, and a daughter Mabel Cummer Roe who lived nearby. Each, it would appear, received what they wanted in the division. Waldo and Clara Cummer gained the larger part of his mother's gardens and they engaged William Lyman Phillips, a partner in the Olmsted firm, to make important improvements.

For Arthur and Ninah Cummer a trip to Italy in 1930 was an equally deciding factor. Among their visits to many gardens, the hours they spent in those of the Villa Gamberaia, near Florence, proved fateful. It was also on this trip that their purchase of Italian garden ornaments began in earnest. In 1931 they engaged Ellen Biddle Shipman to design an Italian garden showcasing the water features they had admired at Villa Gamberaia and throughout their trip. Much of Judith Tankard's essay is given to the creation and refinement of the Italian Garden, which she describes as "The most significant extant garden on the Cummer grounds today." Several documentary views of this garden, framed on its east side by a green arcade or *gloriette* and featuring paired rectangular reflecting pools flanking a center, grass-covered terrace, with a three-stage fountain at its east end, silhouetted in front of the center opening of the arcade, prove her point. It is an elegant collaboration between a strong-willed client and a learned landscape designer.

*A Legacy in Bloom* is essentially a 126-page book of two parts. The first forty-five pages include a foreword by the museum director, Maarten van de Guchte, an introduction, Judith Tankard's "History of the Gardens" and a short "History of the Cummer Family." Nearly all of the illustrations in these pages are black-and-white documentary photographs, including a ravishing full-page ca. 1924 view of the Wisteria/Azalea/now English Garden. One of the color exceptions is a reproduction of Ninah Cummer's large needlepoint panel, "My Garden at the St. Johns River," which should have been on the cover of this monograph. The remaining pages are a folio of handsome color views of the English Garden, the Italian Garden, and the Cummer Oak by the English-born Mick Hales that were

shot in 2004-2006, most on visits in March, when bloom is at its peak, and April, or in July.

One comes to the end of this book conflicted, and disconcerted to find a two-page chronology listing important events in the history of the family and the gardens that should have been at the front of the book for handier reference. On the one-hand there is a reader's delight in the examination of the impressive garden-making efforts of two generations of the Cummer family spanning a half-century, from 1903 until the deaths of both Ninah and Clara Cummer in 1958, well-told by Judith Tankard. There is also the reader's acceptance of the likelihood that the book was intended for a largely local audience. But, the absence of plans, showing the relationship of the three family gardens to each other in the period from 1903 to 1930, the reorganization of the grounds in 1931, and the orientation of the "English" and Italian Gardens to the home of their maker, Ninah Cummer, critical physical linkages that existed from 1910 and 1931, respectively, to 1960 when the house was demolished, is inexcusable. There is one color reproduction of the "Planting Plan for the Terrace," that is the Italian Garden, produced by Ellen Shipman's office in 1931. But it records no relationship to the house or to the earlier garden designed by the Meehan firm. Except for the one photograph of Arthur and Ninah Cummer's house on page 39, which includes neither of the two surviving gardens, there are but a few glimpses of the houses in which these three important Southern gardeners lived. In short, one reads about these gardens, but cannot fix them to each other, or to the museum which stands today on their acreage. An opportunity to have this book be "a major contribution to the literature of gardening in the Southeast and the United States" was shortchanged.

Davyd Foard Hood

Isinglass

Vale, North Carolina



*Fountain and gloriette, looking toward the north wall at the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens. Photo from A Legacy In Bloom.*



Lynchburg's Old City Cemetery "GraveGarden" is documented in *The Book of Attributes*, by Jane White

*Review by Clair G. Martin, Curator of Rose and Perennial Gardens, Huntington Gardens, Pasadena, California*

The Old City Cemetery in Lynchburg, Virginia was founded in 1806 near the heart of the city. With an estimated 20,000 burials, the cemetery is a historical and horticultural treasure. But years of budget cuts and neglect was taking its toll on the grounds. Maintenance is now under the direction of the City of Lynchburg and the Southern Memorial Association and along with Jane B. White, they have produced a model on which to base further restorations and documentation.

Over the past two years Jane White (a current member of the board of the Southern Garden History Society), her volunteers, and a small staff provided by the city have laboured to produce a survey of the horticultural treasures preserved in the cemetery, now conceived as an arboretum of 19th century plants. Records had not been kept until the early 1990s and many that did exist did only in the heads of the gardeners and volunteers. Beginning in 2006 with support from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust, White was entrusted with gathering all the available information on the plant collection, what horticultural history was available, and map the collections.

*The Book of Attributes for the Living Horticultural Collections of the Old City Cemetery Museums and Arboretum, Lynchburg, Virginia* is the result of their work. Their goals were to map the collections using an aerial photo taken by the City of Lynchburg in 1991 and utilizing modern GPS (Global Positioning System) equipment and document the six most important components of the collection: 274 roses, 64 groups of bulbs, 357 shrubs, 35 vines, and 40 groups of perennials, and 643 trees. All of this time consuming documenting and mapping was done by Jane and her volunteers assisted by the professional staff from the city. Several mass plantings of shrubs, bulbs, and perennials presented a problem in mapping and cataloguing, so it was decided to indicate these as one plant or a line of plants for simplicity.

Each collection has its own section with an

introduction, a fold out aerial map, and catalog. Each collection catalog gives the botanical name, common name, date planted, size at planting, size at maturity, health, source, supplier, individual, if it was a memorial plant, memorial to, story, and comment.

The rose collection receives the same attention to detail plus a more detailed map of the main collection of OGRs (Old Garden Roses) in the cemetery as a whole with location names for the various sections of the cemetery.

Many growers of old roses will remember Carl Cato who was an early coordinator of the newly formed Heritage Roses Group. A long time correspondent, Carl, had started collecting unknown old roses in the Lynchburg area and expanded his collection to roses from all over the south. Carl was approached by Jane to help identify the five old roses in existence in the cemetery in 1985 and together they came up with the idea of planting an educational collection of old roses along an existing wall in the Confederate section. This collection has become one of the main focuses of the plantings and is the crowning jewel of the arboretum.

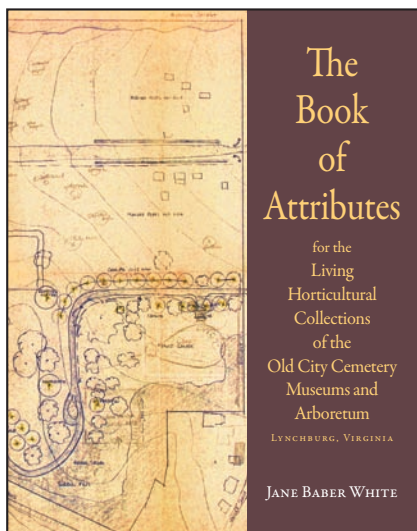
Between 1985 and Carl's death in 1996, he propagated many roses from his own collection and volunteers and friends donated other roses to increase the display value of the collection. The Southern Memorial Association funded irrigation for the roses in the early 1990s and the rose collection has thrived through weather, neglect, and all the care the dedicated volunteers could provide.

The final three sections of the book are dedicated to Stories, Sources, and Historical Reference. Included under Historical Reference are a number of reprints of articles on Carl Cato and the arboretum, and hand done maps and notes all documenting the history and importance of the old rose collection.

This immense publication has been assembled by hand and spiral bound. It measures 9" x 19" x 1.5" and weighs around ten pounds according to Jane! From a curatorial point this is a very important work and a fantastic model for any garden to follow in documenting its own collections. One cannot over emphasize the importance of record keeping, without which a collection quickly becomes no more than a display garden of pretty flowers. I have long wished that beyond who provided the plants we should be collecting information on what was their original source to discover where the primary source of propagating material came from. This way many clearly incorrect names could be traced back to an original source or collection. Retail horticultural suppliers are too busy to keep such records but it would be very important to our collections and future collectors if they did.

Creating maps utilizing GPS equipment is the wave of

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## Book Reviews.....(continued from page 15)

the future. Even camera cell phones often have this feature, which only needs to be initialized to record location tags on photos. This information can be transferred to a map and documented for future reference.

Jane's crew used more sophisticated equipment for their mapping but because of the relatively large number of roses in a small space the map is somewhat difficult to read. A better contrasting color for the numbers other than white might have made the map more legible, but with a magnifying glass and perseverance one can use the map to discover the location of the roses in the cemetery collection.

On a smaller scale this model could be used for private collections as well. Few home gardeners go to the trouble of mapping and documenting their collections but the time spent doing so is well worth the effort in the long run. Many ardent OGR collectors have discovered and propagated foundling roses and keeping records on these collections could be of great research value.

The model presented by the *Book of Attributes* is not the only model for documenting collections, and publishing costs can be prohibitive. Utilizing Web site technology, a garden or collector could assemble a similar document with photographs and make this information available through a public Web site. In this way, researchers from all over the world could access this information and share findings.

Jane Baber White, the City of Lynchburg, the Southern Memorial Association, and the staff and volunteers of the Old City Cemetery are all to be congratulated on the completion of this project. It sets the

standard for other collections to emulate.

*The Book of Attributes* is not for sale. Due to the prohibitive cost of printing and assembling such a large volume, Jane White and The Southern Memorial Association published only 25 of this highly important reference, which have been presented to public libraries. Although not for sale in a printed form, they created a CD version, which can be ordered from the Old City Cemetery for \$20 plus shipping. For ordering information, visit their Web site at [occ@gravegarden.org](mailto:occ@gravegarden.org) with your credit card.

Jane White has followed *The Book of Attributes* with a new book: *Once Upon a Time...A Cemetery Story*, which will be available in September 2009. This is her personal story as she followed her twenty-seven year passion and fascination for the Old City Cemetery landscape. She developed a vision and called upon hundreds of friends, new and old, to make that vision a reality and saved the stories discovered along the way. This book is about what she did, why, and how...and how the renewed graveyard, or "gravegarden," looked—"once upon a time"—when she retired.



## Bill Welch receives National Garden Communication Award from the American Horticultural Society

**William C. Welch** is one of 12 outstanding members of the national horticultural community honored by the American Horticultural Society (AHS) during its Great American Gardeners Awards Ceremony and Banquet on June 4, 2009. Welch is this year's recipient of the AHS's B. Y. Morrison Communication Award. This award recognizes effective and inspirational communication—through print, radio, television, and/or online media—that advances public interest and participation in horticulture.

Since 1972, Welch has taught horticulture at Texas A&M University and he currently works for the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in College Station. Dr. Welch was instrumental in developing the Texas Certified Nursery Professional program. He has served on the

Board of Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. as Landscape Design Chair for the past 24 years and is a past president of the Southern Garden History Society. He has written several garden books, including *Perennial Garden Color* (Taylor Trade Publishing, 1988), and *Antique Roses for the South* (Taylor, 1990). Welch is also the editor of the Southern Garden Web site and he contributes regularly to *Southern Living* magazine and numerous other publications. Welch makes frequent presentations to garden clubs and nursery industry groups, and in 2008 he received the Garden Club of America Distinguished Service Medal.

For more information about the AHS's Great American Gardeners Awards, please contact Viveka Neveln at (703) 768-5700 ext. 120 or [vneveln@ahs.org](mailto:vneveln@ahs.org).



## Old Salem's RSG&L Conference..... (continued from page 3)

André Michaux into the South and across its landscape.

The conference's traditional sharing session, which sometimes extended well into the evening beyond the conviviality of available drink, is replaced this year with a special presentation at Friday's lunch in the Old Salem Visitor Center. Mary Audrey Apple, an attendee of past conferences who has become a resident of Old Salem, will present her research into the Moravian photographic archives and a personal perspective on her findings under the title "A Picture is Worth a Thousand. . . ." Historic Landscape Photographs of Salem and Vicinity."

A pair of papers on the Friday afternoon schedule completes the offering of "Resources for the Historic Southern Garden." William Woys Weaver, the food historian and author of *Heirloom Vegetable Gardening: A Master's Guide to Planting, Seed Saving, and Cultural History*, looks afresh at the merits of old Southern favorites in "Mainstreaming the Heirloom Vegetable: Historical Narratives, Nutritional Bonanzas." A similar approach will be taken by David C. Vernon of North Carolina's Century Farm Orchards when he addresses "Heirloom Apples: Fruit with a Purpose."

The afternoon program continues on the Reynolda estate, whose gardens were the subject of the final paper of the 1979 conference, a talk by their superintendent Paul McGill. Attendees have pleasant options. Time is allotted for strolls in the gardens, shopping in Reynolda Village, touring the mansion and its art collection, and taking in a photographic exhibit in the new gallery, *Heroes of Horticulture: Photographs of Culturally Significant Landscapes at Risk*. Drinks at six o'clock will be followed by supper on the grounds at seven.

On Saturday morning, 26 September, with Davyd Foard Hood as moderator, attendees will have the pleasure of listening to three speakers who have not previously appeared on the programs of either the Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes Conference or the

Southern Garden History Society. Each brings experience and expertise in garden restoration to their remarks. Copies of the newly-published *Historic Virginia Gardens: Preservation Work of The Garden Club of Virginia, 1975-2007* were available for purchase in Camden. Margaret Page Bemiss, the author of this landmark survey of recent restorations of The Garden Club of Virginia, and Will Rieley, the landscape architect who serves as the consulting architect to the organization and has appeared on the past RSG&L conference programs, will speak to their efforts as historians and garden preservationists, at the desk and in the garden, in "Historic Virginia Gardens: Discoveries and Recoveries." The Garden Club of Virginia has funded important garden restoration projects at Mount Vernon, Monticello, and Montpelier, the grounds of the nation's first, third, and fourth presidents, respectively. Oak Hill, the estate of President James Monroe in Loudoun County, Virginia, has remained in private ownership and sympathetic stewardship. Gayle DeLashmutt, who resides there with her husband Tom, will speak on "Tending Mr. Monroe's Garden" at the estate acquired by her husband's family in 1948. The privilege embodied in these Virginia gardens represents one series of experiences. Another, more commonplace experience is reflected in a Georgia garden addressed by Sue Burgess in "The Root House, A Mid-Nineteenth-Century Middle-Class Merchant's Home: Challenges of Recreating the Historic Southern Landscape in a Hostile 21<sup>st</sup> Century Urban Environment."

Guided tours of the Old Salem gardens will be available Thursday afternoon. The plant sale will continue throughout the conference. Tours of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts will also be available to participants. As usual the conference will conclude with a summary. This year John Larson, vice-president for restoration at Old Salem Museums & Gardens, has the honor of recounting this anniversary conference. And, yes, there will be cake.

## Members in the News

**Bill Noble**, director of preservation for the Garden Conservancy, is featured in July 23 edition of the *New York Times*, in an article by Anne Raver: "A Design Sprouted from Aged Ruins." The article features the garden created by Bill Noble and Jim Tatum overlooking the foothills of Vermont's White Mountains.

The June 2009 issue of *Architectural Digest* includes "The Tale of Toad Hall," an article about the home of **Kreis and Sandy Beall**, owners of Blackberry Farm in Tennessee. The exterior architecture was designed by Jack Davis and the interiors by Suzanne Kasler.

*Traditional Home* magazine, June 2009, features the Natchez, Mississippi residence of **Drs. Bob and Bettina Barnes**.

The May/June 2009 issue of *Southern Accents* includes a story on the California Residence of **Larry and Lulu Navarre Frye** in Atherton. Their house was designed by Norman Askins and interiors by Jackye Lanham, both of Atlanta.

*Views* magazine includes the Highlands, North Carolina projects of **Charlotte and Finley Merry** with several **Hugh and Mary Palmer Dargan** landscapes. Ms. Dargan will be featured also in the September issue of *Southern Accents*.

# Cultivating Kentucky: the Historic Landscape of Oxmoor

By Valencia Libby, Heritage Consultant

Since 1787 Oxmoor, Kentucky, has been the site of a pioneer settlement, a slave plantation, and a country estate. No one knows who named the property Oxmoor or where the name came from, but it already had that name when Alexander Scott Bullitt (1762-1816) acquired title to approximately 500 acres along the Beargrass Creek east of Louisville in 1787. Within a few years he and his wife built a frame house on the property and cultivated the land for tobacco and grain with the labor of 45 slaves. In the 1820s their son built a row of slave quarters and a brick kitchen, a smokehouse and outbuildings, all of which still stand. He also planted the entrance drive of black locust trees extending almost half a mile. In 1829 he enlarged the house with a brick addition on the front, doubling its size. Oxmoor prospered as a plantation until the Civil War when the house was abandoned, the land divided between various family members, and the farms rented out. No family member returned to live there until 1906.

William Marshall Bullitt (1873-1957), a prominent attorney in Louisville, purchased the estate from his uncle in 1906 in order to re-establish the family's connection with Oxmoor. As Louisville was only nine miles away, he could oversee improvements to the property of 70 acres and use it as a country house. During the early phase of restoration, Bullitt employed the landscape architect Marian C. Coffin of New York on the recommendation of his friend, Henry Francis du Pont of Winterthur, Delaware. Coffin was to devise a plan for the grounds, which would unify and improve their beauty.

Marian C. Coffin (1876-1957) was one of the first women to practice landscape architecture in America and her design skill and practical sensibility were exemplary. Coffin obtained her professional education from MIT and set up a small office in New York in 1904-05. Oxmoor was one of her first large commissions, many of which were received through her friendship with Henry Francis du Pont, and it was her first experience working in the South. When Marshall Bullitt contacted her in the fall of 1910 she soon came to Oxmoor for a site visit and prepared the landscape plan by the spring of 1911. Work was completed that year. Although she was unfamiliar with the terrain and climate of Kentucky, Coffin displayed a remarkable sensitivity to the regional landscape. The outline of the two-acre yard surrounding the house became the framework for the ornamental grounds.

Beyond this area, an orchard and fields created a suitably rural background, as it still does today. She left the older trees of the original entrance drive standing but designed a new, straighter drive between them that created a strong axis to the center of the house. The new drive ended in a commodious turnaround.

The central axis continued through the house to the rear with a walkway and a double flower border leading to Mr. Bullitt's tennis court. The focal point for the rear axis was a large old pecan tree. Coffin designed a series of geometric gardens along the back of the house with narrow brick paths and tight little boxwoods outlining the beds. These garden compartments were filled with roses, low shrubs and herbaceous flowers selected to create specific color schemes. Two white wooden arbors and two elegant summerhouses terminated the axial paths of the flower garden and were enveloped in vines and climbing roses. While Coffin believed the style of geometric gardens she was creating complemented the historic period of the house, today we recognize them as the Colonial Revival and their color schemes as an aspect of 20th-century design. The more formal gardens were spatially reinforced with taller, less formal plantings of flowering trees and shrubs. All of the ornamental plantings were contained within the roughly square two-acre yard. The service area was carefully defined along the kitchen side of the house. Aside from the loss of many privet hedges and many roses during the first winter; the overall landscape plan was successful and survived well into the 21st century.

In 1913 William Marshall Bullitt married Nora Iasigi (1882-1996) and the two maintained Oxmoor as their country house. They expanded the mansion in 1915 and the 1920s with plans developed by the architect J. Burrall



*One of two reconstructed summer houses, circa 1911-12, built for Oxmoor by local craftsmen.*

Photo by Val Libby



Hoffman Jr., adding a second floor and two symmetrical wings, one of which housed the family library of historical papers. They turned the brick slave kitchen into a studio for Mrs. Bullitt who was a sculptress and they built a swimming pool in part of the orchard. Bullitt continued to add parcels to the estate until he owned almost 1,000 acres. When Mr. Bullitt died in 1957, his widow continued to reside at Oxmoor and their son, Thomas W. Bullitt, inherited the property.

Thomas W. Bullitt (1914-1991) and his second wife Kay Stammers Bullitt (1914-2002) would be last occupants of Oxmoor. They would leave the historic portion of Oxmoor - the mansion, its outbuildings, landscape and gardens - to the Commonwealth of Kentucky by establishing a 79-acre conservation and preservation easement sufficient to protect the critical areas. But Thomas Bullitt realistically assessed the commercial value of Oxmoor's acreage and planned for its commercial development. In the 1970s he leased out a portion of the property for the construction of a shopping mall and an office park and before his death in 1991 he finalized plans for the remainder to be developed. (His mother who still lived at Oxmoor hated passing the mall.) Mr. Bullitt entered into a legal arrangement with the Filson Historical Society to allow them use of the mansion and library with sufficient funds (in trust) to maintain it following his and his wife's deaths.

Through the many years that Oxmoor had served as a private estate, family members had added new plantings to the gardens with little regard for the 1911 design. By the time the estate was left in trust for use by the Filson Historical Society in 2002, the beauty of the original Coffin design was obscured and areas badly neglected. Family trustees were anxious to renew the beautiful gardens they remembered from childhood before the property opened to the public. In 2006 they formed a preservation committee which met regularly at Oxmoor

to carry out plans for the restoration and adaptive re-use of both house and gardens. The committee included local professionals and Val Libby, a member of the Southern Garden History Society, who was asked to serve as the consultant for restoration of the historic landscape. Because of her expertise on Marian Coffin, Libby worked closely with Louisville historian Samuel W. Thomas and professional arborist Richard Wolford to determine the appropriate measures for the landscape.

The preservation committee agreed that Coffin's original 1911 plan and the resulting design were of primary significance to Oxmoor and that it should be restored as closely as possible. Much of the infrastructure remained in the gardens but in poor condition. They also agreed that the double herbaceous border which once ran almost 200 feet behind the house was a key feature of the landscape. It had been designed by Coffin to display a specific color scheme which was possible to re-create by interpreting the original plant list using a selection of old fashioned and contemporary perennials. Future maintenance needs were carefully considered before any plan was carried out. In 2007 the work was primarily removal and propagation of the replacement plants. In 2008 replanting began and was completed for the double herbaceous border and the flower gardens under the direction of Oxmoor's horticulturist. Replanting the shrub and tree areas is on-going, so that the beauty of Oxmoor's landscape may be enjoyed by the public as it has been enjoyed by the Bullitt family for more than two centuries.

Coffin's concept of a historically suitable design and her sensitivity to the vernacular landscape made a sophisticated new design for this historic property. Recent decisions made during Oxmoor's restoration/re-creation have brought a twenty-first-century concern for access and sustainable management to bear. The result is a historic plantation landscape that may look better now than it ever looked in the past.

## *Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden Update*

*By Dia Steiger, Charlotte, North Carolina*

Since Wing Haven took possession of the Lawrence property in the fall of 2008, we have completed many of the structural repairs and improvements that were necessary prior to opening the garden as a public facility. The garden is now open on Tuesday afternoons, Wednesday mornings and all day Saturday.

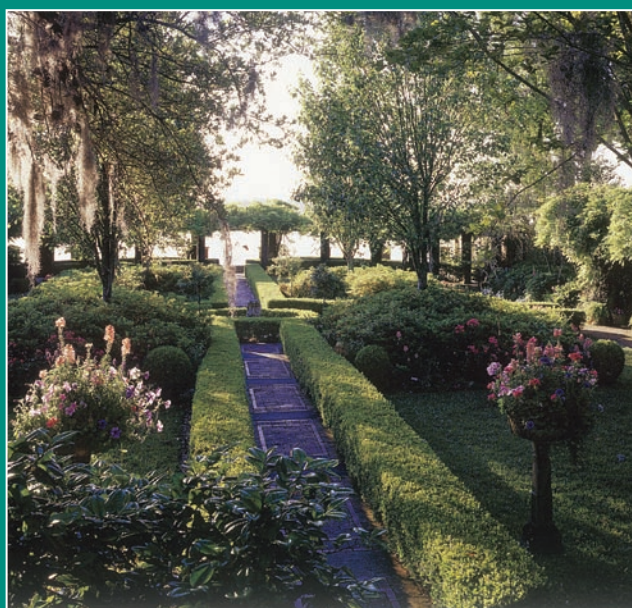
With the guidance of the Garden Conservancy we are developing a plan for the management and future develop-

ment of the garden, and we look forward to beginning serious work on the rehabilitation of the garden. Katie Mullen, this year's recipient of the Marco Polo Stufano Garden Conservancy Fellowship, will work full-time in the Lawrence garden from September until May. She will focus her efforts on revitalizing the garden while helping to position the property so that it attracts a greater number of visitors. For more information or to plan a visit, please contact [Lawrencegarden@carolina.rr.com](mailto:Lawrencegarden@carolina.rr.com) or (704) 334-4170.



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Center walkway with boxwood parterres at the Cummer  
Museum of Art and Gardens  
Photo from *A Legacy In Bloom*

## 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 2008-2009 year. Membership categories:

<b>Benefactor</b>	<b>\$250</b>
<b>Patron</b>	<b>\$150</b>
<b>Sustainer</b>	<b>\$75</b>
<b>Institution or Business</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Joint</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Individual</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>Student</b>	<b>\$10</b>

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*Deadline for the submission of articles for the fall issue of Magnolia is October 15, 2009.*

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