



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

# Magnolia

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## From Mexico to the U.S. Capitol: Unraveling the Mysteries of a Mid-19th-Century Garden in Abbeville, South Carolina

By Ann Hutchinson Waigand, Herndon, Virginia

*Less than two months before he left for the Mexican War, Captain Jehu Foster Marshall signed the deed to purchase twelve acres in the village of Abbeville Court House in upstate South Carolina. Little did he know that he would be starting a landscape legacy that would unveil fascinating secrets five generations later.*

When the 29-year-old Captain Jehu Foster Marshall set sail for Mexico he was hardly a newlywed. He and his wife, the former Elizabeth DeBruhl, married in 1843, already had two small boys and a third on the way. A wealthy plantation owner, who studied law at South Carolina College, Marshall (1817-1862) would soon open a law office on the Abbeville Public Square. The dashing young gentleman was also becoming an avid plantsman, so the village property he purchased gave him a chance to indulge in creating more formal gardens than a plantation might warrant. One of three men who called for the creation of an agricultural society around 1855 (a call realized through the work of William and A.G. Summer of Pomaria Nurseries)<sup>1</sup>, Marshall, a state senator, contributed articles to *The Planter and Farmer*, chaired judging committees for the State Agricultural Fair, and was selected as orator for the 1857 State Agricultural Society.<sup>2</sup>

Marshall signed the deed for his in-town land on December 12, 1846, and then rode off in January 1847 to Hamburg, South Carolina, gathering men for the Palmetto Regiment and serving as Captain. He left for Mexico fired with a sense of patriotism that would later cost him his life at the Battle of Second Manassas in the Civil War. Under the command of General John Anthony Quitman, his were among the first troops to enter Mexico City. General Quitman's reward was appointment as Military Governor of the occupied city, and thus we find Captain

Marshall writing home in October 1847: "I now write to you from the National Palace of Mexico, with one of the windows of my room opening upon the far famed Botanic Garden of Mexico, which by the by is nothing but a humbug, for there is nothing in it, but what I have seen before, with the exception of a tree, which the Mexicans say was planted by Montezuma himself,

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Coast Redwood and fountain.

Photo: Jean Robertson Hutchinson

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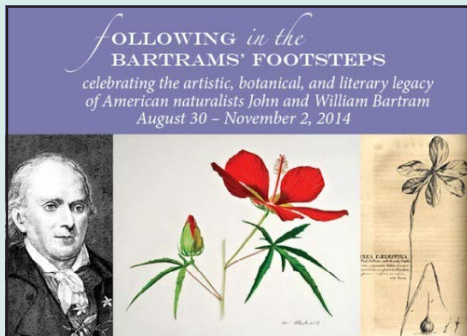
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# CALENDAR

**August 30-October 31, 2014. "Following in the Bartram's Footsteps,"** a touring exhibition at the North Carolina Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill. The American Society of Botanical Artists (ASBA), in collaboration with Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia, has curated this exhibition of forty-four contemporary botanical artworks depicting North American plants discovered and introduced by John and William Bartram from their travels throughout the eastern wilderness between the 1730s and 1790s. Additionally, the NCBG is hosting a wide variety of lectures and workshops related the exhibition.

Call (919) 962-0522; email: [ncbg@unc.edu](mailto:ncbg@unc.edu); or visit: [ncbg.unc.edu/bartram/](http://ncbg.unc.edu/bartram/)



**October 10-11, 2014. The 26th Annual Southern Garden Symposium and Workshops,** St. Francisville, Louisiana. Featured speakers LSU Ag Center's Dan Gill and New Orleans landscape architect Rene Fransen are joined by SGHS board members and authors Dr. William Welch and Greg Grant along with Chris Weisinger. Venues include Afton Villa Gardens, Beechwood, Hemingbough, Jackson Hall at Grace Church, Rosedown Plantation, and Temple Sinai. Call (225) 635-3738 or email [lucieccassity@bellsouth.net](mailto:lucieccassity@bellsouth.net); visit [southerngardensymposium.org](http://southerngardensymposium.org)

**October 15 – 17, 2014. "Telling the Gardens Story,"** presented by the Historic Landscape Section of the American Public Garden Association, hosted by Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library, Newark, Delaware. Join historic landscape and garden professionals to explore, learn, and share strategies for interpreting our gardens to new audiences in the digital age, while honoring layers of history, caring for aging plant collections, and building core support within the organization. Keynote speaker: Charles Birnbaum. Contact Linda Eirhart at [LEirha@winterthur.org](mailto:LEirha@winterthur.org)

**October 31-November 2, 2014. "Colonial Revival at the Crossroads: Colonial Revival landscapes—**

**their significance, challenges, and preservation,"** at Stratford Hall, Virginia, explores how to identify, evaluate, interpret, and manage Colonial Revival landscapes. The three-year study of Stratford Hall's landscape and gardens, along with other regional Colonial Revival sites, will offer participants a "case study" in which to explore these issues. Speakers include: M. Kent Brinkley, Elizabeth Hope Cushing, SGHS Honorary Director Kenneth McFarland, Dennis Pogue, William Rieley, Douglas Sanford, Lucy Lawliss, and Beate Jensen. Contact Jon Bachman, [jbachman@stratfordhall.org](mailto:jbachman@stratfordhall.org); call (804) 493-1972; visit [stratfordhall.org/event](http://stratfordhall.org/event)

**November 13-14, 2014. "Olmsted's Legacy in the South," the Southern Garden Heritage Conference,** the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, Athens. Frederick Law Olmsted, considered the father of American landscape architecture, and his two sons helped forge the profession in America. Thursday evening will consist of a reception and Olmsted re-enactment by Kirk Brown, in conjunction with the annual Johnstone Lecture. Friday lectures by Lucy Lawliss (National Park Service), Bill Alexander (The Biltmore Estate), Spencer Tunnell (Tunnell and Tunnell in Atlanta), Andrew Kohr (Stantec Consulting), and others. Presentations will relate to Frederick Law Olmsted and how his vision has influenced our present-day landscape architecture. Visit [botgarden.uga.edu/eventdetails](http://botgarden.uga.edu/eventdetails)

**April 11-13, 2015. 69th Annual Colonial Williamsburg Garden Symposium.** More details to follow. Visit [history.org](http://history.org)

## Upcoming SGHS Annual Meetings

**May 15-17, 2015. Nashville, Tennessee.** Meeting headquarters: the Nashville Marriott at Vanderbilt University.

**October 1-3, 2015. 20<sup>th</sup> "Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes" Biennial Conference,** held in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Conference is co-sponsored by Old Salem Museums & Gardens; Reynolda House Museum of American Art; and the Southern Garden History Society.

**April 21-24, 2016. Charleston, South Carolina.** Meeting headquarters at the Francis Marion Hotel.



## From Mexico to the U.S. Capital:..... (continued from page 1)

and that there is none other in the world like it.”<sup>3</sup>

The tree he describes, the Montezuma Cypress (*Taxodium mucronatum*), considered the world’s stoutest tree, remains today as a massive but desiccated trunk in Mexico City’s Chapultepec Park. But the impression it made must have stayed with Marshall, who went on to populate the formal gardens surrounding his home, built around 1850, with members of the *Cupressaceae* family: Cunninghamia (*Cunninghamia lanceolata*), Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), and Mexican Cypress (*Cupressus lusitanica*).<sup>4</sup> All survive today. Family legend once claimed that Marshall returned via California, bringing the redwood tree as a seedling in his saddle bag. Records show, however, that Marshall sailed from Vera Cruz, Mexico, to Mobile, Alabama—coming ashore on June 29, 1848.<sup>5</sup> He returned home overland, arriving in Abbeville on July 13.<sup>6</sup>

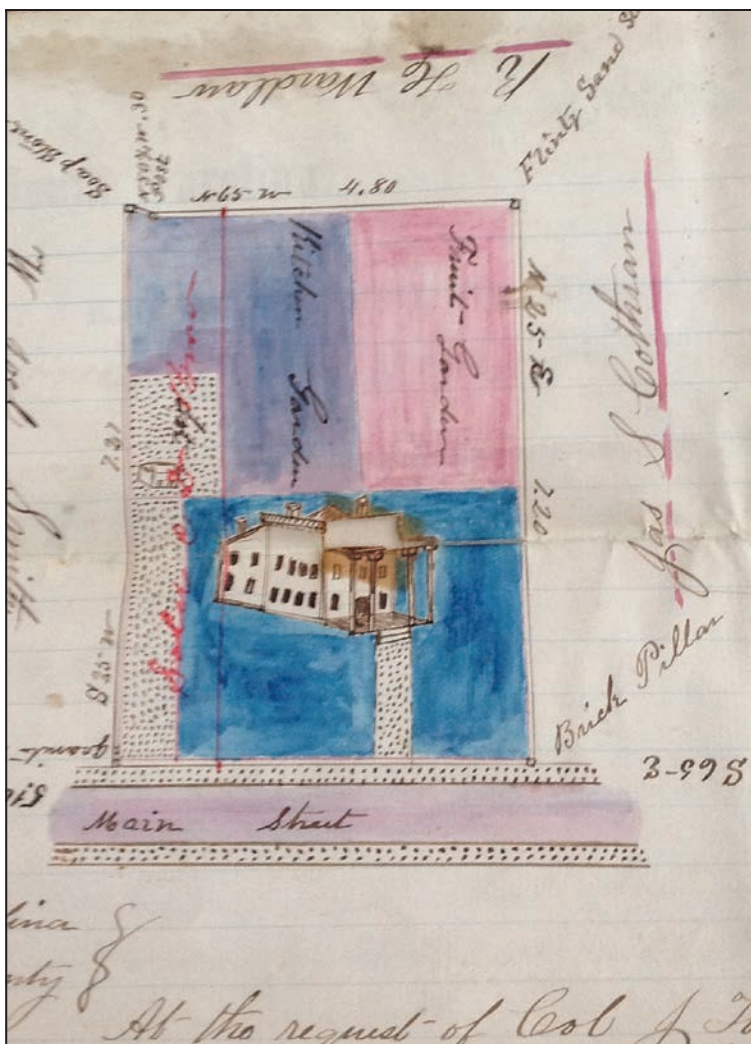
The redwood tree, which now stands over 120 feet tall and is the second tallest “structure” in town (after Trinity Episcopal Church steeple), is recorded as the oldest and tallest in South Carolina and likely is the oldest and tallest east of the Mississippi.<sup>7</sup> It is particularly notable for thriving outside of its natural habitat as Abbeville sits almost four hours from the nearest coastline. At least three other Coast Redwood trees can be found in Abbeville, grown from seedlings gifted by the current owner’s mother to friends in the 1950s.

Though no record of the actual purchase of the redwood has been uncovered, Dr. James Kibler has found evidence of other Foster Marshall purchases in extant records of Pomaria Nurseries. The Summers offered Coast Redwoods, under the name *Taxodium sempervirens*, in their 1852/53 catalog and sold a Montezuma Cypress to a Columbia buyer in 1862. Certainly these trees would have

been known to the Summers, as Mexico was fertile ground for plant collectors; in fact, the Summers’ European gardener, James Crammond, wrote an article in 1859 on “New and Special Trees of Mexico.” As late as 1860 Marshall was purchasing Deodar Cedars (*Cedrus deodara*) from the Summer brothers.<sup>8</sup>

Marshall landscaped his property extensively as evidenced by recollections of Abbeville residents. Lewis Perrin, writing in *The Index-Journal* (Greenwood, SC) in 1933, observed that “the grounds surrounding the house were filled with rare shrubbery and tropical trees.”<sup>9</sup> Marshall was not only attracted to conifers. At least six magnolia trees (both *Magnolia virginiana* and *Magnolia grandiflora*) grace the property, towering over forty feet in 2014. The remnants of an allée of Crape Myrtle, now thirty-five to forty feet tall, suggest a walk that extended to a side drive or possibly all the way to the street.

Though the 1873 deed conveying the property to the current owner’s grandmother contains a small colored



1872 deed for Foster Marshall house.

pencil drawing, it only shows the house and the locations of a kitchen garden and a fruit garden in back. But John E. Gardin, writing in 1925 about his experiences living in the household in the early to mid-1860s when his grandmother was serving as the family governess, remembers the house being “set in a beautiful formal garden of the period with an imposing background of majestic red oak trees... encompassed on three sides by a fancy picket fence with undulating lines...extended along its entire length was a most remarkable piece of topiary work about fifteen feet high consisting of mock orange trees, trimmed to represent an arcade...In all my travels throughout the world, not excepting the famous gardens of Versailles, have I seen anything to equal it.”<sup>10</sup>

(continued on page 4)

## *From Mexico to the U.S. Capital:..... (continued from page 3)*

The earliest photographs, dating from 1885 (the author's grandmother is faintly visible as a baby in the arms of a nursemaid on the porch), show formal gardens graced with clipped and manicured boxwood and fine decorative ironwork, including a fourteen-foot-tall cast iron fountain. A veritable maze of boxwood, at the corner of the yard today, offers a fleeting glimpse of the important role boxwood played in Marshall's formal gardens. Though much of the boxwood remains on the property, an unknown number of boxwood shrubs were sold to the "Williamsburg Boys" who came to town in the early 1930s, collecting plants for the Rockefeller-financed recreation of Colonial Williamsburg. (Trinity Episcopal Churchyard also sold boxwood to the project.) The four-tiered fountain, topped by a mythical dragon-headed beast with female body, wings, and entwined fish tails, ceased operation after the Civil War (in the 1885 photo, the fountain basin is filled with plants). It was one of two fountains on the property (only a basin survives from the smaller fountain) and, with the two greyhound dogs that flank the steps to the front door of the current home (built in 1881 after Marshall's house was destroyed by fire), a garden settee, and several chairs, gives evidence of Foster Marshall's wealth, fine taste, and far-reaching connections.

In 2013 the current owner restored the cast iron fountain. Though over a century of wind and storms had toppled its crowning statuary, as well as the first two basins, the only pieces that had to be refabricated were a post between two basins and one of the dragon heads. The fountain, it turns out, is what we today would call a "multimedia" experience. As water cascades from one basin to the next, it gives out a series of descending tones, creating a melody of sound to add to the fountain's visually stunning effect. Who, in the 1850s, could have created such a work of art?

Though ornamental ironwork was popular in England and France in the 1840s, it was just coming into vogue in the U.S. in the 1850s, when Marshall would have been purchasing his pieces. A search for the fountain's maker turned up an identical fountain (no. 10) in the 1855 catalog of Janes, Beebe, & Co., a New York City-based iron foundry.<sup>11</sup> Janes, Beebe was known to have sent a representative to the 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition in London to collect patterns and ideas from the European exhibitors.<sup>12</sup> But since there was no patent law at the time, foundries liberally copied the designs of their European counterparts...and of each other. For example, the Abbeville garden settee, known as the rustic style, appeared in catalogues of iron foundries Wood & Perot, J.W. Fiske, Chase Brothers, and J.L. Mott.<sup>13</sup> Without order letters or receipts, how could one make a definitive assignment of the Abbeville fountain and ironwork to Janes, Beebe?

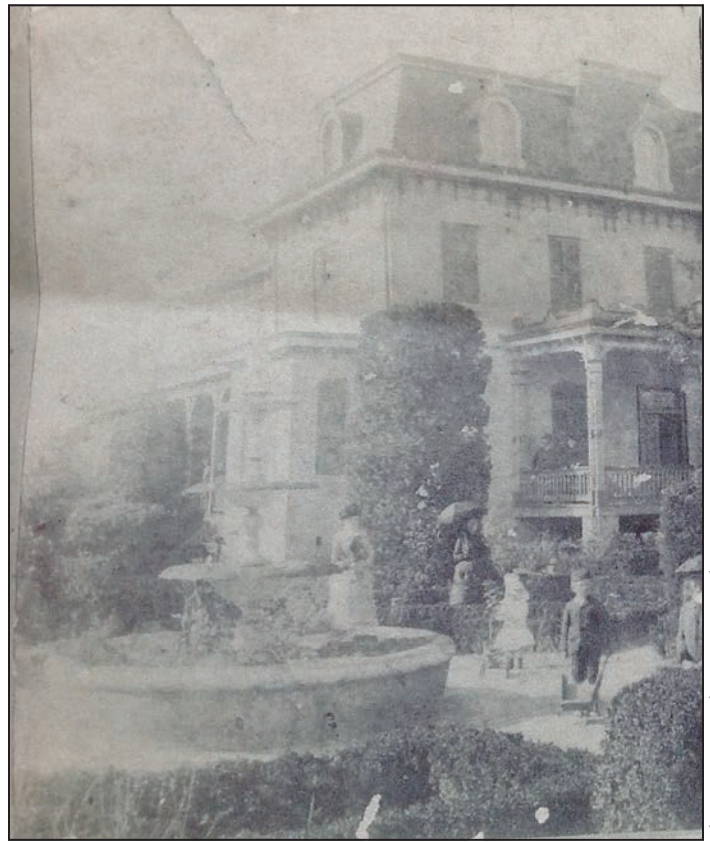


Photo: Ann Hutchinson Waigand

Earliest known photo of formal gardens (1885).

Such a provenance would be particularly compelling since Janes, Beebe was the iron foundry responsible for the U.S. Capitol cast iron dome, the Bow Bridge in Central Park (only the second cast iron bridge in America), several cast iron settees still sitting on the White House lawn, and the fountain in Savannah's Forsyth Park (no. 5 in the 1855 catalog and documented in the 1859 payments ledger of the city of Savannah).<sup>14</sup>

Several tantalizing clues have helped to flesh out the attribution of Abbeville's fountain. In contrast to ornamental ironwork of European origin, most American iron pieces do not carry a signature or imprint. Yet Abbeville's rustic settee bears the embossed imprint "Janes, Beebe & Co. NY" across the front rail. Since purchasers typically patronized only one or two establishments (Adelicia Acklen of Nashville's Belmont Mansion, which has a treasure trove of mid-nineteenth-century ornamental ironwork, purchased both from Janes, Beebe & Co. and Philadelphia-based Wood & Perot), we can surmise that the fountain, dogs, urns, chairs, and settee were likely from the same foundry.

More definitive proof is found, however, when considering the peculiar sculpture on top of the fountain, which is found in no other American ornamental ironwork catalogs of the period. A search for its inspiration led to the 1892 catalog of Société Anonyme Des Hauts-Fourneaux & Fonderies Du Val d'Osne<sup>15</sup>, a collective of foundries in



France that included J.P.V. André, who created the original design seen in the Forsyth Park fountain (and exhibited it at the Crystal Palace Exhibition), and J.J. Ducel, responsible for a number of Paris Metro signs. Fantastical figures are represented throughout the 900+ plates of the Val d'Osne catalog; the Abbeville fountain top design, however, appears just once. The earliest rendering of this part-dragon-part woman-part fish design can be found in the 1850 catalog of J.J. Ducel, a catalog which the foundry owner would surely have carried with him when he exhibited at the Crystal Palace Exhibition.<sup>16</sup> Thus we can trace the fountain top from France to London to New York to Abbeville and Marshall's formal gardens.

Equally intriguing is the question of how Foster Marshall, living in a small village in South Carolina, would have known about Janes, Beebe & Co. Extant ledgers of the 1850s from Gray and Robertson, an Abbeville mercantile store owned by the author's great-grandfather, are filled with bills of sale from New York City merchants, verifying that sending "up north" for goods was certainly an accepted practice. But why not order from Philadelphia, home of Wood & Perot, or any of the other equally, if not better-known, foundries? The answer may lie in personal

connections; the 1850s world was, we must remember, a much smaller place.

At the same time Janes, Beebe & Co. (known as Janes, Fowler, and Kirtland, beginning in 1859) would have been working on Marshall's ornamental ironwork, the foundry was also heavily occupied with work for the U.S. Capitol. Charles Fowler, one of the owners, was personal friends with Capitol architect Thomas U. Walter. When the first Library of Congress, then housed in the Capitol building, burned in 1851, Walter turned to his friend's company to rebuild it as an all-iron room, safeguarding the nation's remaining treasures (two-thirds of the books purchased from Thomas Jefferson's library in 1815 were lost in the fire)<sup>17</sup>. Ornamental cast iron ceilings in the Senate and House chambers (since removed but still visible in the 1939 film, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*) were also the work of Janes, Beebe.<sup>18</sup>

Foster Marshall had his own connection to the Capitol in this time period. Fellow Trinity Episcopal Church member Armistead Burt served in the U.S. Congress from 1843—1853 and was a close friend of Jefferson Davis. (It was in Burt's Abbeville home that Davis, fleeing Union

*(continued on page 6)*



Fountain top, designed by French foundry, J.J. Ducel.



Detail of fountain top.

## *From Mexico to the U.S. Capital:..... (continued from page 5)*

soldiers in early May 1865, met with his Council of War to decide that the Confederacy's chances had ended.) Davis, as Secretary of War, persuaded President Franklin Pierce to put the Capitol building in his department. In doing so, he gained oversight of the Capitol Extension construction and was a major catalyst in getting the iron-work at the Capitol funded, particularly the dome. (This was an unintended irony as the dome came to be a powerful symbol of the Union.)<sup>19</sup> He would have definitely known the work of Janes, Beebe and could have passed information on the firm to his Abbeville friend who passed it on to Marshall. Likewise, Marshall's brother-in-law James Lawrence Orr, who represented South Carolina in the U.S. Congress from 1849 to 1859 and held the position of Speaker of the House for fifteen months, would have been at the Capitol for the unveiling of the Janes, Beebe House chamber cast iron ceiling and the beginning work on the dome. He, too, could have told his wife's brother about the company's excellent workmanship.

A more remarkable coincidence, Burt served as Treasurer and Marshall as Building Committee member (and major benefactor) for the construction of the new Trinity Episcopal Church in Abbeville (1859/60).<sup>20</sup> During recent research related to restoration fundraising, the author discovered a letter to the architect from stained glass artist William Gibson. This, in turn, led the Gibsons' biographer, Jean Farnsworth, to postulate that Gibson, considered to be the "father of stained glass painting in America," may have made the church's (extant) chancel window. Is it more than serendipity that William Gibson's brothers in 1859 were creating stained glass skylights for the U.S. Capitol and that William Gibson's New York place of business, 374/376 Broadway, was just doors away from Janes, Beebe & Co. at 356 Broadway?<sup>21</sup>

These and other mysteries of Marshall's gardens continue to tantalize. Though no landscape plans for Marshall's veritable arboretum have yet been located, a rudimentary schematic of existing trees, as well as the stumps of the Deodar Cedars (removed due to disease around 1900), suggests a deliberate plan for the largest trees and the two fountains. At present, the design of the garden lives on only in our imaginations, a catalyst for an ever-increasing list of questions about Marshall's landscape vision: How did Janes, Beebe's fountain fit into Marshall's grand plan? It may have been just a whim that led Marshall to select this most distinctive design; the statuary on top, however, appears to represent a French legend, which may have been familiar to Marshall. Why are so many members of the *Cupressaceae* family found in his landscape? It could have simply been the current fashion or, perhaps, Marshall was attempting to replicate, in a manner, what he saw in

Mexico. Dr. Kibler believes there is a little bit of truth in every legend. Could the Mexican Cypress have been the saddlebag seedling of the family's legend? Or did the noble captain, who was impressed only with the Montezuma Cypress, bring a seedling of this stout tree home with him or buy one from Pomaria only to have it wither and die in the Abbeville climate? How fitting then that, in searching for a replacement, he would have turned from the world's stoutest tree to the world's tallest, the Coast Redwood.

We are left to speculate as we gaze in wonder and admiration at the towering trees and fine iron sculpture that remain a testament to a man remembered by Abbeville, long after his death, as "the darling of the people."<sup>22</sup>

*Ann Hutchinson Waigand, daughter of the current owner, will begin a United States Capitol Historical Society Fellowship in fall 2014, researching the history of the iron foundry, Janes, Beebe & Company.*

### **Endnotes:**

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## In Print

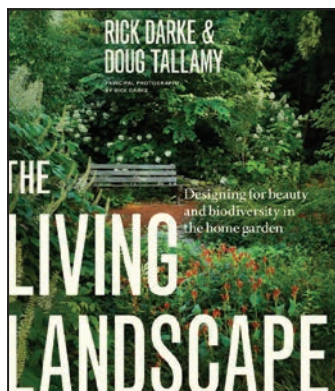
***The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden***, by Rick Darke and Douglas W. Tallamy. Timber Press, 2014 | Cloth, 392 pages | ISBN-10: 1604694084; ISBN-13: 978-1604694086 | List Price: \$39.95

Rick Darke and Doug Tallamy are two of America's leading voices in sustainability and horticulture, and their latest collaboration seeks to inspire gardeners to create landscapes full of life and integrated with their surrounding environments.

*The Living Landscape:*

*Designing for Beauty and*

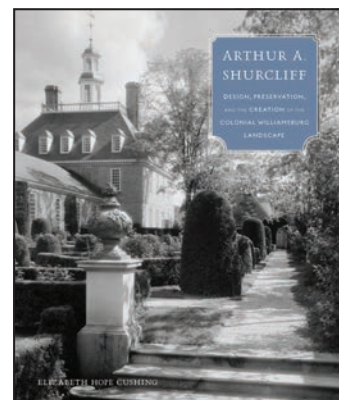
*Biodiversity in the Home Garden*, reveals their insights on beauty and biodiversity, plants and pollinators, and new design strategies for personal gardens large and small. Tallamy, an entomologist, educator, and author of the award-winning *Bringing Nature Home*, offers his comprehensive understanding of the role plants play within the larger environment, from providing fruit for birds, food for insects, or a place for bees to pollinate. Darke, a knowledgeable field ecologist, horticulturist, talented nature photographer, celebrated author, and designer of natural landscapes, brings his considerable understanding of world ecologies and landscape ethics to the pages in clear and inspired language.



**Arthur A. Shurcliff – Design, Preservation, and the Creation of the Colonial Williamsburg Landscape**, by Elizabeth Hope Cushing. University of Massachusetts Press, 2014 | Cloth, 298 pages | ISBN: 978-1-62534-039-9 | List Price: \$39.95

In 1928 the landscape architect Arthur A. Shurcliff (1870–1957) began what became one of the most important examples of the American Colonial Revival landscape—Colonial Williamsburg, a project that stretched into the 1940s and included town and highway planning as well as residential and

institutional gardens. In this richly illustrated biography, Elizabeth Hope Cushing shows how Arthur Shurcliff's early years in Boston, his training, his early design and planning work, and his experience creating an Arts and Crafts-style summer compound in Ipswich led to Colonial Williamsburg, the largest commission of his career and his most significant contribution to American landscape architecture. Published in association with Library of American Landscape History: [lalh.org/](http://lalh.org/)





# Rocking the Landscape

## Atlanta Artist and Gardener is Renovating a Historic Rock Garden

By Geraldine Adamich Laufer, M.S., APR, Atlanta, Georgia

The greatest gift of a garden is the renewal of the five senses, and a historic Atlanta rock garden is once again providing just that. Over the past year an Atlanta artist and gardener began restoring a rock garden on the former estate of Equifax founder and entrepreneur Cator Woolford (1869-1944). The rock garden is one landscape element of the thirty-nine-acre former Woolford estate in historic Druid Hills, Atlanta's second trolley suburb, designed in the late nineteenth century by Frederick Law Olmsted. The estate was set among hills in a mature Oak-Hickory forest in the Georgia Piedmont, on the eastern edge of the city of Atlanta.

The landscape was originally designed and installed in the mid-1920s, with the rock garden and its water features immediately adjacent to the Woolford House on sloping terrain. Later, the estate was sold and the landscape declined. In 2013, when local artist and Oakland Cemetery head gardener Cooper Sanchez was appointed to restore the site, he found an abandoned, time-worn rock garden suffering from more than fifty years of neglect.

He set out to return the rock garden to its original state. To do so, Sanchez drew on his hybrid background of art and horticulture. The rock garden has been transformed into what he describes as “a vibrant garden

filled with traditional Southern shade plants.” Plantings will come into full bloom next spring and increase in beauty in subsequent years.

The change is dramatic. “Guests at the Atlanta Hospital Hospitality House (AHHH) and the current residents, say that they feel a real connection to nature when they come to the rock garden. I couldn't ask for a better compliment,” smiled Sanchez.

Spencer Tunnell, Atlanta founder of Tunnell & Tunnell Landscape Architecture, placed this rock garden in historical context. “Rock gardens were an incredibly popular design trend of the 1920s for estate gardens, but the plant material was changed from alpine plants used in the North to regionally suitable Southern garden plants. The existence and restoration of this rock garden allows a more complete understanding of how the property was developed and enjoyed by the Woolford Family,” he explained.

The Woolford mansion, initially laid-out by renowned Atlanta architect Philip Shutze is positioned at the top of the property with lawns and borders flowing down to the entrance. Owen J. T. Southwell, the actual architect for the house, collaborated with Philadelphia landscape architect Robert B. Cridland who was also practicing in Georgia at the time. Cridland's book, *Practical Landscape Gardening* (New York: A. T. De La Mare Printing and Publishing,



Woolford Estate restored rock garden.

Photo by Jay Thomas



1916), covers the “Wild Garden and the Rock Garden,” *de rigueur* elements for estate designs of the time.

The Woolford rock garden was featured in a December 1929 *Atlanta Journal Magazine* article, “700 Rock Gardens in Atlanta.” It described a Tom Thumb golf course immediately adjacent to the house, and the rock garden with a “figure 8” stepping stone pathway, a cascading waterfall, and a lower level with a heart-shaped pool and moated fountain.

While calling on the AHHH in 2012, Philanthropist Sara A. Hehir saw the tangle of vegetation and appreciated that it again could be something special. After funding the restoration, Hehir said, “The Trustees of The Sara Giles Moore Foundation are pleased to have made an investment that will promote the health and well-being of the AHHH community, while preserving the character of this historically significant site.” She recruited Cooper Sanchez for the job.

Before work could begin, a Dekalb County Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) was secured, a requirement of the Druid Hills Civic Association, founded in 1938 to preserve the beauty, serenity, and unique heritage of the Druid Hills neighborhood. Old photos, Cridland’s book, and a 2010 landscape inventory were consulted.



Cooper Sanchez at the Woolford Estate rock garden.



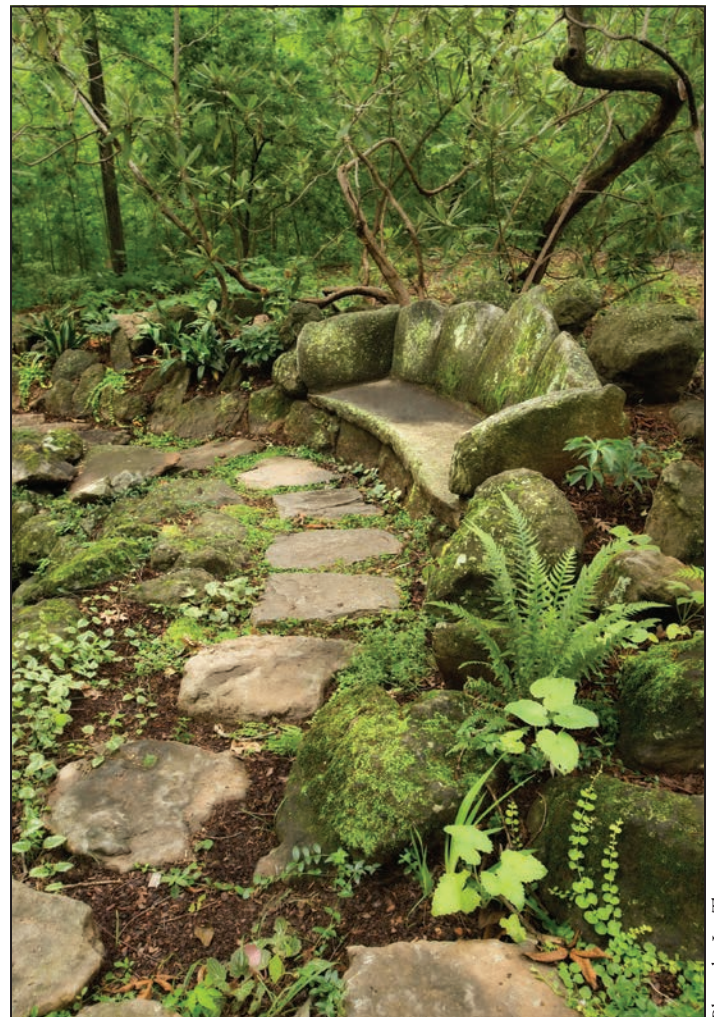
Landscape Architect Robert Cridland’s signature “stone sofa” provides seating halfway down the slope.

## Rock Garden Restoration

Cooper Sanchez first visited the site in September 2013 and made the following assessment: “The rock garden was covered with English ivy, poison ivy, Japanese honeysuckle, privet, wisteria, and Virginia creeper, plus mulberry and Mahonia that had overrun the garden. It was apparent that rocks were out of place and rubble had been added to the site, with contractors dumping debris over the years. [There were] bits of brick, cinder block, granite curbing, and rock from elsewhere on the property...dumped there as well. The stepping stone path was not visible, having sunken to a depth of about four inches from decades of settling and leaf debris from hickory, oaks, and tulip poplars. This improved the soil but was a testament to how long the garden had been abandoned.”

The initial clean up also involved an inventory of existing plants. Structural plants were evaluated, while diseased and misshapen plants were removed, and the remaining pruned to provide height and structure. Sanchez remarked, “I chose the healthiest dogwoods and woody ornamentals to save, and ultimately...put in more trees than I took out.”

*(continued on page 10)*



Robert Cridland’s restored stone bench.

Photo by Jay Thomas



## Rocking the Landscape..... (continued from page 9)

By the end of 2013, Sanchez focused his attention on the rocks and stepping stone path and was especially enthusiastic about this stage of the restoration. "Revealing the structure of the stepping stone path was one of the most exciting ... aspects of the project. The more time I spent there, the more I realized how much thought and planning had gone into the garden structure. Bringing the stepping stone path to the surface really accentuated the design."

Eight-foot pry bars lifted each and every rock, on the average about the size of a desk top and more than 250 pounds each. At approximately 2' x 3' x 16" thick, the path rocks were flat-topped with rounded bottoms; massive, heavy, and dense. Sanchez settled on a team of three men, who shimmed the raised rocks underneath with slate, rock, and soil to prevent re-sinking. In his understated manner, he acknowledged, "That was a chore. We basically tried to raise the stepping stones two to three inches above surface. Each rock was handled at least three times, and they were reset with their own weight settling them into the ground."

### Restoring Water Features and Planting 2013-2014

The original topography had a change of grade of approximately twenty-five feet from the top to the bottom of the sloping garden. A naturalistic grotto became the "headwaters," or water source, giving the appearance of an underground spring. The water flows fifteen feet over a six foot drop into the first pond, and then another twelve feet before dropping six to seven feet into the lower pond, which acts as a moat for the bubbling fountain. Jim Higginbotham from the Atlanta Botanical Garden

maintenance staff was brought in to assist. "He could see the potential," said Sanchez. "He could visualize." The team installed new pipe, and one powerful new pump with enough for both the waterfall and the moated fountain.

Woody ornamentals and shade-loving perennials were planted to soften the rocky structure. According to the original landscape architect's written words, "The introduction of small, compact growing shrubs will give an appearance of stability to the rockery and deter the eye from taking in too much at one time." Sanchez followed Cridland's directive, "The arrangement of the plants should be in clumps or colonies of one variety . . ." Pockets of soil between the steps were newly planted with creeping groundcovers to unify the rock garden landscape.

At the foot of the rock garden and throughout the property grow some of the most spectacular mature Carolina Hemlocks (*Tsuga caroliniana*) in the country. Due to their separation from the main population of native hemlocks in Eastern North American forests, these may be isolated from infestation by the destructive hemlock Woolly Adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*). Efforts are proceeding to have them evaluated for Champion Tree status by the Georgia Forestry Commission, and/or included in the National Register of Big Trees.



The restored garden officially reopened in April 2014 at the annual luncheon of the AHHH membership. Since 1981 AHHH—a not-for-profit organization—has provided lodging, meals, comfort, and companionship to out-of-town families of patients in over thirty Atlanta-

area hospitals. The restoration of the historic rock garden and its unique water features was a great opportunity to provide additional consolation for the residents of the AHHH and enable them to reconnect with nature during what is often a stressful time.

The grounds of the AHHH and the Frazer Center, including walking trails, picnicking, and the restored rock garden, are open to the public from dawn to dusk. The waterfall operates during daylight hours and is off during the cold winter months, approximately two-three months out of the year. Visit <http://www.ATLHHH.org/RockGarden> for more information.



Photo by Jay Thomas

The Figure 8 stepping stone pathway encircling the water features.



# Two Decades of Archaeology at Stratford

The August 26 edition of Fredericksburg's *The Free-Lance Star* features an article on **Stratford Hall's** archaeological program: "Excavations Reveal how Lee's Slaves Lived." The reporter, Clint Schemmer, highlights the work of University of Mary Washington archaeologist Douglas Sanford who, since 1993, has led a five-week field school every summer at this historic site in Virginia's Northern Neck. Sanford has focused on illuminating the lives of the Lees' enslaved workers—the under-documented or undocumented people who lived there. The field school just ended its twentieth, and final, season at Stratford with Sanford.

In recent years, the school has focused on what it calls the Oval Site, which borders the huge oval drive in front of the great house. This area, now a tree lined drive from the Colonial Revival Era, held an agricultural operation tended by an overseer and his enslaved workers. Judy Hynson, director of research and library collections, noted that the overseer's complex would have been seen by visitors before they could even get a glimpse of the Lees' home. According to Hynson, "We now know that the current pristine vista from the main house looking south would have been cluttered with not-so-beautiful structures and domestic activities in the

mid-eighteenth century."

Paul Reber, executive director of the Robert E. Lee Memorial Association, praised the work of the Stratford-UMW collaboration. "We are especially grateful for Doug Sanford's over 20 years of work and dedication to this partnership." Reber went on to say, "The end of these field schools is not the end of our archaeology program. We plan to conduct a major excavation of the West Yard in the coming years, and look forward to working with UMW on the cataloging of the thousands of artifacts discovered during their work at Stratford Hall."



## Members in the News

The **Anne Spencer House and Garden Museum** was featured in Lynchburg's *News & Advance* Sunday Lifestyle section, August 3. The article expanded on a previous feature in *The Washington Post* and included several photos of the house interior, Spencer's writing cottage "Edankraal," and Spencer's granddaughter, **Shaun Spencer-Hester**, president and treasurer of the historic site foundation.

The **Monticello** gardens were featured in *The Washington Post* gardening columnist Adrian Higgins' September 24 article "Monticello's Ode to Autumn." Higgins celebrated Monticello's annual Heritage Harvest Festival and the work of Gabriele Rausse, Director of Gardens and Grounds.



Shaun Spencer-Hester

Photo: Ryan Stone/for *The Washington Post*



Southern Garden History Society

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## Awards and Scholarships

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

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

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

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

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

## Annual Membership Dues

The society's membership year is from **August 1—July 31**. The membership secretary will mail renewal notices in the summer for the 2014-2015 year. Membership categories:

<b>Benefactor</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>Patron</b>	<b>\$250</b>
<b>Sustainer</b>	<b>\$125</b>
<b>Institution or Business</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Joint</b>	<b>\$60</b>
<b>Individual</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Student</b>	<b>\$15</b>

For more membership information, contact:  
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Email: [membership@southerngardenhistory.org](mailto:membership@southerngardenhistory.org)  
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*Deadline for submitting articles for the Fall issue of Magnolia is November 15, 2014.*

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