



Magnolia

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

Bulletin of the
Southern Garden
History Society

Vol. XIV

No. 2

Summer 1998

"Mountain Heritage: Biltmore Estate and the Blue Ridge"

**Southern Garden
History Society**

*Sixteenth
Annual Meeting*



**Mountain Heritage:
Biltmore Estate & the Blue Ridge**



**May 29–31, 1998
Asheville, North Carolina**

The sixteenth annual meeting of the Southern Garden History Society took participants to the heart of the magnificent Blue Ridge mountains from May 29th through 31st. The meeting, headquartered at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Asheville and adjacent to the home of Thomas Wolfe, focused on the palatial Biltmore Estate and the design

legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted. Conference coordinator William E. Alexander, landscape curator of Biltmore, assembled an impressive program, which focused on the history, restoration, and care of this property. The meeting began with Bill Alexander's overview of the history of the estate, "Frederick Law Olmsted's Landscape Masterpiece." His slide presentation was enhanced by Biltmore's archive of historic photographs of the construction of George W. Vanderbilt's home and the development of his landscape. [Many of these historic photos were included in the handsomely produced conference booklet of speakers and article.] Then, attendees were treated to an afternoon in the gardens at Biltmore. Beginning with the Italian Garden, with its formal parterres and fountains, members descended through the "Ramble" or Shrub Garden of unusual native and exotic specimen trees and shrubs. Then participants walked through the famed Walled Garden, designed by Olmsted in 1892 as a kitchen garden, but changed to reflect Vanderbilt's desire for "a garden of ornament rather than utility." In addition to the perennials and annuals, the lower half of the garden contains more than 3,000 roses consisting of over 200 varieties, including most of the roses recognized by the All American Rose Society. Descending from the Conservatory, which stands at the end of the Walled Garden, the landscape flows into the Spring or Vernal Garden and then to the Azalea Garden or Glen.

The Glen is an area that has undergone a great deal of change over the years since it was first envisioned by Olmsted. After the influence of the Olmsted firm had dwindled, Chancey Delos Beadle,

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CALENDAR

Now through October 24th, 1998. "A Woman's Touch: Rose Ishbel Greely's Landscape Architecture in Washington, DC," sponsored by The Historical Society of Washington, DC in the Patterson Gallery. Focused on the legacy of one of Washington's first female landscape architects, the exhibit features drawings and photographs of many of the gardens that Greely designed in the metro area from 1923 through 1956. SGHS member Joanne Lawson is guest curator for the exhibition. For more information, contact The Historical Society at 1307 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC; (202) 785-2068. [Ms. Lawson is currently conducting a survey of historic Texas landscapes. See article this issue.]

September 4th -5th, 1998. "Contemporary Issues in a Historic Public Garden," the regional meeting of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta, co-sponsored by Monticello and the University of Virginia. This meeting will address the challenge of sustaining the diverse, and sometimes antithetical, roles of a historic garden, house museum, college campus, arboretum, and public garden. Speakers from the University and from Monticello include Peter Hatch, Warren Byrd, Will Reiley, Mary Hughes, and Mike Van Yahres. Tours include the gardens at Monticello, UVa, and the Morven Estate. For information, write Monticello, P. O. Box 316, Charlottesville, VA 22902, or call (804) 984-9816.

October 1st -4th, 1998. "A Sense of the South," 1998 Charleston Garden Festival. The festival will pay special tribute to Charleston's First Lady of Gardening, Mrs. Emily Whaley. Her daughter, Anne Le Clercq, will give the lecture Mrs. Whaley intended to give in person on Sunday, October 4th. Exhibitors include internationally-known Ryan Gainey, Brookgreen Gardens, and Riverbank Zoo & Botanical Gardens. Speakers include garden designer Phillip Watson, garden writers Scott Ogden and Felder Rushing, University of Georgia professor Alan Armitage, and Antique Rose Emporium founder Mike Shoup. For more information call Florence Crittenton at (843) 722-0661, fax (843) 577-0770, e-mail: FloCritSC@aol.com

October 10th, 1998. Landmarks Garden Tour of twelve landmark gardens in Madison, Georgia. Sponsored by the Morgan County Landmarks Society. Gardens to be open include Cedar Lane Farm, home of SGHS member Jane Campbell Symmes; Brick Cottage, home of Jeanne

Symmes; and historic Boxwood, home of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd C. Newton Jr. among others. The event will also include a book reading and signing by SGHS member Jim Kibler, author of *Our Father's Fields*. For further information contact the Morgan County Landmarks Society, P.O. Box 248, Madison, GA 30650 or call (703) 342-0434.

October 15th -17th, 1998. "Rediscovering Old Virginia," Eleventh Annual Symposium on Architectural History at the University of Virginia. Speakers include Carl Lounsbury and Edward Chappell of Colonial Williamsburg and SGHS member C. Allan Brown. For information call the Department of Architectural History at (804) 924-1428 or write to the School of Architecture, Campbell Hall, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

March 25th-28th, 1999. "Expect the Unexpected – The Greener Side of Houston." The 17th annual meeting of SGHS. More details to come in future issues.

May 1999. "Bartram 300: A Gathering," marking the birth of John Bartram in 1699. [See article this issue.] For information, contact Nancy E. Hoffmann, Ph.D., Symposium Chair, c/o Historic Bartram's Garden, 54th St. and Lindbergh Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19143; phone (215) 729-5281, fax (215) 729-1047; e-mail: bartram@libertynet.org

September 30th -October 1st, 1999. "Plans and Plants of the Southern Landscape" has been selected for the theme of the twelfth biennial *Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes* conference at Old Salem. It is hoped that the development of this theme will help those involved in landscape restoration by providing historic plans, documents, and plant lists that can be useful as guidelines. The conference committee is seeking papers on this topic. SGHS members who have research material on gardens and landscapes in the South, especially material that has not been published, are encouraged to contact the landscape conference coordinator, Kay Bergey, Old Salem, Inc., Salem Station, Winston-Salem, NC 27108.

October 14th -18th, 2001. 9th International Heritage Rose Conference in Charleston, South Carolina. [See article this issue.] Contact Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, P. O. Box 975, Charleston, SC 29402, (803) 853-8000.

“Mountain Heritage: Biltmore Estate and the Blue Ridge...
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The Rose Garden and Conservatory (circa 1930s)

superintendent of the Landscape Department, fostered and transformed the Glen into the garden it is today. Beadle planted many conifers from the Biltmore nursery in the Glen, adding an evergreen character to the largely deciduous earlier design. To this framework he added many other varieties of trees and shrubs over the years—many of which he collected from his travels. For a decade and a half, from 1930 to 1945, Beadle, along with two nurserymen friends, William A. Knight and Frank W. Creighton, and Beadle's trusted chauffeur and assistant, Sylvester Owens, made numerous excursions throughout the eastern and southeastern United States searching for and collecting many species of native plants. Particularly intriguing to Beadle and his friends were the many species and natural hybrid forms of the native deciduous azaleas. The “Azalea Hunters,” a name they coined for themselves, searched for and collected virtually every form and color variation of these azaleas wherever they could find them. Beadle believed them to be the finest American shrubs and, in 1940, he gave his collection to Biltmore Estate and carefully planted them in beds throughout the Glen. Today, Beadle's collection is recognized as one of the most complete collections of native azaleas in existence.

The afternoon ended with a look at the nursery and sales area, which continues to propagate from the plant species found on the estate. That evening meeting participants returned to Biltmore for a reception and dinner at the estate's Deepark Restaurant. The night concluded with extensive private tours of the mansion, which lasted until well past 11:00 p.m. Seeing the mansion by candlelight and the grounds by moonlight was truly a rare and magical experience. The following morning Bill Alexander spoke again on current landscape preservation philosophies and the forestry at Biltmore, followed by two members of his staff, Terry Stalcup and Suzanne Habel, who addressed “The Best of the Old and

the Best of the New: Plant Selection for Landscape Restoration” and “A Garden of Ornament, Not Utility.” Their lectures served to embellish the gardens and grounds tours of the previous day. Stephen P. Miller, senior vice president of The Biltmore Company, rounded out the morning by detailing the business of “Preserving a National Historic Landmark Through Private Enterprise.” The meeting's focus shifted to the surrounding countryside by Saturday afternoon, when participants were bused to the Folk Art Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway. There Carlton Abbott, one of the key designers of the Parkway, spoke on “The Story Behind the Scenery,” followed by Forrest MacGregor of the American Chestnut Foundation, on “Recovering the American Chestnut.” The day concluded with bus tours to various points along the Parkway, culminating with an evening of festivities at the Taylor Ranch, complete with wagon rides, horse shoes, and raucous square dancing. Many participants took part in the optional tours on Sunday, which took in the North Carolina Arboretum and the

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The present day Walled Garden with roses at the Biltmore Estate.



The Gardens at Biltmore Estate – Restoration of the Historic Landscape

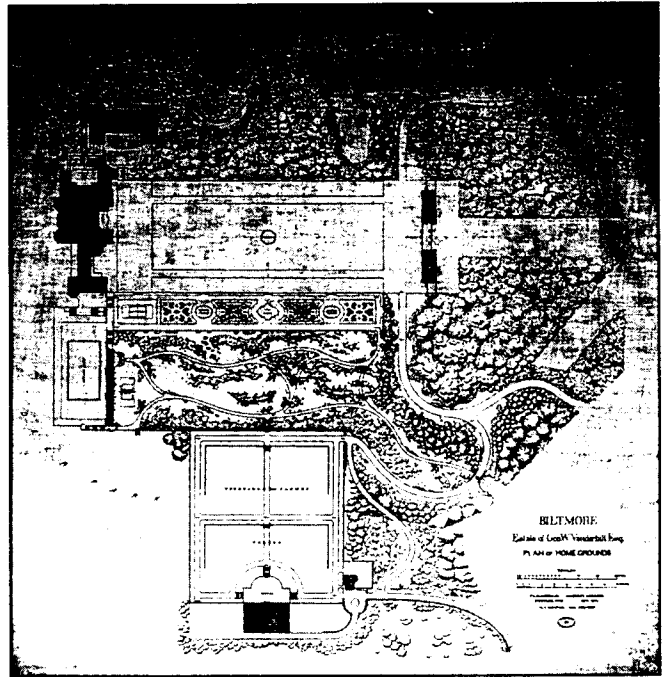
by William E. Alexander, Landscape Curator,
Biltmore Estate

The extensive gardens (approximately forty acres) of Biltmore Estate comprise the greater part of “the Home Grounds” as designed in the 1890s by Frederick Law Olmsted, father of landscape architecture in America, for George W. Vanderbilt to surround his Biltmore House near Asheville, North Carolina. The house, a 250-room French Renaissance chateau, was the masterpiece of noted architect, Richard Morris Hunt. Both the house and the landscape were the last and largest private works undertaken by these great American designers in their respective careers. Their collaborative efforts resulted in a challenging and unique project, the likes of which have been unequaled in North America, and perhaps the world. The house and gardens were created in the midst of nearly eight thousand acres of cut-over, eroded and over-farmed land, which Olmsted and Vanderbilt transformed into a



Biltmore Estate was the result of collaboration among three talented men: Richard Morris Hunt (standing, second from left), George Vanderbilt (standing, right), and Frederick Law Olmsted (sitting, center)

state-of-the-art farm and a model, scientifically managed forest, the first of its kind in America. Upon completion of the estate, miles of scenic carriage drives led through the improved and managed woodlands, extensive open



Olmsted's plan of the “Home Grounds”

parklands, by tranquil lakes and flowing streams, and by lush pastures with herds of cattle and sheep.

Recognizing the extreme significance and historical value of Biltmore's landscape, The Biltmore Company has undertaken the responsibility of and is dedicated to its preservation, restoration, and maintenance for future generations to enjoy. Now a century old, the landscape has matured, and in some cases, has begun to decline or deteriorate. In many ways, the preservation and restoration of this mature landscape presents greater challenges than Olmsted faced in its establishment. Plants, being living things, eventually weaken and succumb to environmental conditions such as drought, insects and diseases, wind and ice damage, lightning, atmospheric pollutants, or simply old age, and thus cannot be preserved forever. Although individual trees and shrubs cannot be preserved, the integrity and continuity of the landscape design can be. The secret of successful preservation and perpetuation of a landscape is succession planting, that is, periodic planting at staggered intervals over a long period of time. In actuality, this process will never end and is much the same as nature renews and perpetuates the wild landscape. We have established a nursery and are propagating most of the trees and shrubs that are needed for replacement planting. Several hundred trees are being planted in the landscape annually, not counting thousands of forest seedlings.

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Plantings are not the only feature of the landscape that need preserving or restoring. Ponds and lakes eventually become silted over if not dredged or cleaned out. Stream banks erode and need repair. Other features, known as landscape hardworks, deteriorate and also need restoration work. Some projects completed already include: repair of the brick walls on the Rampe Douce, restoration of the pool and fountain on the Front Lawn, resurfacing of the Italian Garden pools, and replacement of the irrigation systems in the garden.

Restoration must also take into consideration layers of landscape additions or design changes over the decades. It would be difficult, if not unrealistic, to honor only Olmsted's proposed design and not to consider the wishes of Vanderbilt that were incorporated or the sixty years of influence and changes made by Chauncey Delos Beadle.

It also would be ridiculous to replant species that have not proven hardy, or those particularly vulnerable to major attacks from insects and disease and thus requiring an unreasonable amount of maintenance, or those that have become invasive in the landscape.

The estate is no longer the private country retreat of a gentleman and his family, but an attraction visited by more than 800,000 people annually. Modern needs, such as restrooms, food services, parking lots, handrails, etc. must be met and incorporated into the landscape in a manner that is sensitive to the environment. Lastly, restoration is expensive, and can only proceed as fast as funds allow. At any rate, all efforts are being made to keep the estate grounds as historically accurate as is possible and reasonable ... always having regard for the spirit of Olmsted's concepts, while at the same time meeting the needs of a new and growing audience. ✦



Biltmore House "Home Grounds" upon completion (circa 1896)



Survey of Historic Texas Landscapes

A survey of Historic Texas Landscapes (1836-1986) is now being planned under the direction of three Texas natives: Sadie Gwin Blackburn, past president of the Garden Club of America and co-author of *Houston's Forgotten Heritage*; Susan Booth Keeton, chair of the Bayou Bend Gardens Advisory Committee and a board member of the Rice Design Alliance; and Joanne Seale Lawson, a practicing landscape designer and architectural historian who is the author of the *Gardener's Guide* calendar series and a board member of the Friends of the National Arboretum.

Research for the survey is funded through Bayou Bend, one of Texas' outstanding public gardens. The published report will identify a wide range of designed Texas landscapes, ranging from private estates and heritage ranches or farms to public parks, campuses, and institutional sites. The survey will provide valuable material for education programs, as well as assist the preservation planning efforts of federal, state, and local groups. The results of the survey will also be incorporated in *The Catalog of Landscape Records in the United States*.

Among the members of the advisory board for this ambitious endeavor are the Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation, Bayou Bend Gardens, Houston's Museum of Fine Arts, the Garden Conservancy, the National Park Service, The National Parks and Conservation Association, The Nature Conservancy of Texas, The Texas Historical Commission, The Texas Historical Society, The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, The Townscape Institute, and members of the faculty of Baylor University, Louisiana State University, Rice University, Texas A&M, and the University of Houston.

Anyone with information about significant Texas landscapes is encouraged to write or call for a survey form to: The Survey of Historic Texas Landscapes (1836-1986), 2640 Fountainview, Suite 204, Houston, TX 77057-7606; phone (713) 975-6614, fax (713) 975-1709, e-mail: TexSurvey@aol.com. ✦

Corrections: The volume number for the Spring 1998 issue of *Magnolia* was printed incorrectly. The correct citation should be Vol. XIV, No. 1, 1998.

The photo credit for the picture of the board members in Tallahassee, printed in the Winter issue, Vol. XIII, No. 4, 1998 should be "Joseph Marianno."

Spring Meeting of SGHS Board in Asheville

reported by Flora Ann Bynum, Secretary-Treasurer

Peter J. Hatch, Monticello's director of gardens and grounds, in Charlottesville, Virginia, was elected president of the Southern Garden History Society for a two-year term at the annual business meeting in Asheville, North Carolina. Kenneth M. McFarland, site manager of Historic Stagville, in Durham, North Carolina, was elected vice-president, and Flora Ann L. Bynum of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, was re-elected secretary-treasurer.

New members elected to the board are James R. Cothran of Atlanta, Georgia; Gail Griffin of Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC; Davyd Foard Hood of Vale, North Carolina; and Larry Paarlberg of Goodwood Museum & Gardens in Tallahassee, Florida. Elected for a second term are James I. Barginier of Montgomery, Alabama; Nancy F. Haywood of Houston, Texas; Ken McFarland; and J. Dean Norton of Mount Vernon, Virginia.



From left to right: Ken McFarland (front), Peggy Cornett, Mary Hughes, Carleton Wood and Perry Mathewes at the Biltmore Estate.

Nancy Haywood announced plans for the 1999 meeting in Houston, "Expect the Unexpected—The Greener Side of Houston," to be held March 25th - 28th. The board voted to accept an invitation for the 2001 meeting from Carleton Wood of Tryon Palace Historic Sites and Gardens in New Bern, North Carolina. The year 2000 meeting has been set for Mount Vernon, with Dean Norton as host.



Dr. William C. Welch reported to the board that the publication of *Nouveau Jardinier* by Louisiana State University Press was moving ahead under the sponsorship of the society. The small booklet is an early publication on gardening in New Orleans, and is considered an important early source of information on French gardens in America. Sally Reeves of New Orleans is editor of the publication for the society.

Dr. Welch appointed a steering committee to present a "major proposal" for a plant list for the South to the fall board meeting. On the committee are Ben G. Page, Jr., of Nashville, Tennessee serving as chair; Peggy L. Cornett of Monticello; Gordon W. Chappell of Williamsburg, Virginia; Mr. Hatch; and Mrs. Bynum.

A committee composed of Ms. Cornett, Dr. Elizabeth M. Boggess of Natchez, Mississippi, Harriet Jansma of Fayetteville, Arkansas, and Mr. McFarland was appointed to annotate the index of *Magnolia* for future publication.

At the annual business meeting before the members Mrs. Bynum, on behalf of the society, thanked Dr. Welch of College Station, Texas, for "his splendid leadership and the many contributions he had made to the society" during his two-year term as president. The society also extended special thanks to William Alexander of the Biltmore Estate and Gardens for organizing such an outstanding annual meeting in Asheville. Also during the business meeting, Fletch Coke of Nashville showed slides of the recent tornado damage to hundreds of trees at the Hermitage in Nashville. Patti McGee of Charleston, South Carolina outlined plans for the International Heritage Rose Conference in Charleston in October 2001. +



Flora Ann Bynum and Gail Griffin on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Symposium and Franklinia Census to Commemorate Bartram 300 Celebration



The 300th anniversary of the birth of America's first botanist, John Bartram, takes place in 1999, and to commemorate this momentous event, the Bartram 300 celebration will honor America's first botanist with a symposium in May 1999, organized by the Academy of Natural Sciences, American Philosophical Society, Historic Bartram's Garden, Library Company of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Botanical Club, and Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.



"The botanist," from Howard Pyle,
"Bartram and his garden"

The symposium, "Bartram 300: A Gathering," will focus on John Bartram's eighteenth-century world of science, his trips of exploration throughout the colonies, and his contemporary legacy. The symposium will be organized into three panels. The first will explore Bartram as a scientist and the context of his ideas within the eighteenth-century scientific world, and his friendship and correspondence with other Quakers, scientists, and botanists. The second panel will examine colonial expeditions and Bartram's forays into a

broader, natural world. The third panel will focus on John Bartram's continuing legacies in horticulture, botany, environmentalism, and preservation. A goal of the symposium is to publish the proceedings.

John Bartram's scientific interests led him to explore his native Pennsylvania and to take several extensive trips of exploration to the North and South into almost unknown territories. While principally looking for plants in his role as Royal Botanist, John Bartram made observations on animals, soils, birds, and climate, developing his own ideas about relationships in the natural world. Some of his ideas challenged established science, and many of his ideas were exchanged with

other colonials on visits or in correspondence. As a founder of the American Philosophical Society with Benjamin Franklin, John Bartram was at the center of early scientific activity in this country, and was also recognized in England and by Linnaeus as its most eminent botanist. His interests were passed on in his family to his children who continued the culture of special species of plants in their father's botanical garden, and made their living in horticulture, and especially to his son William, who wrote of his own travels along the routes he learned from his father.

Paper proposals for this symposium are still being accepted. They should be 200 words in length, and submitted by September 15th, 1998 to: Nancy E. Hoffmann, Ph.D., Symposium Chair, c/o Historic Bartram's Garden, 54th St. and Lindbergh Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19143; telephone (215) 729-5281, fax (215) 729-1047, e-mail: bartram@libertynet.org.

Historic Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia is also commemorating the Bartram 300 celebration by conducting a first-ever census of Bartram's most famous discovery, the exquisite *Franklinia alatamaha* tree.

Bartram and his son, William, found a small grove of this unknown tree along the Altamaha River in Georgia in 1765. On a later trip, William brought seeds back to propagate in their botanical garden. It was named *Franklinia* in honor of John Bartram's great friend, Benjamin Franklin.

The tree was never seen in the wild after 1803, but fortunately, because of the Bartram's, *Franklinias* still do exist. All trees growing today are descended from those propagated by the Bartram's, who are credited with saving it from extinction.

There are several *Franklinias* growing at Historic Bartram's Garden, but no one has ever attempted to track down the locations of others. The *Franklinia* Census will help determine how far north and west the tree grows, where in other parts of the world it is found, how big can it get, how long can it live, and more. The census is aimed at determining *Franklinia* locations in both public and private gardens. While not a scientific survey, it will lay the groundwork for future study.

Respondents will receive a *Franklinia* magnet and be entered in a "Franklinia Olympics." Ongoing census results will be published on the Historic Bartram's Garden web page (www.libertynet.org/~bartram). The final results will be posted on the web site at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, a living history festival at Historic Bartram's Garden, a lecture series, a community greening project, an educational contest and a Bartram family reunion. For information or to receive a census form write: Historic Bartram's Garden, 54th Street & Lindbergh Boulevard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19143; (215) 729-5281. ♦

Study Gardens of Noisette Roses to be Planted in Fall 1998 for the 9th International Heritage Rose Conference

by John T. Fitzpatrick, Ithaca, New York

Several hundred plants of the heirloom rose class known as Noisette roses will be planted out in a study plot near Charleston beginning this November. Noisette roses, little known today, originated at Charleston about 1810. They have never before been assembled for scientific study. The study has two objectives. Evaluations of the garden performance of the roses will identify the most desirable varieties for different purposes. Careful comparison of the plants will clear up uncertainty over some variety names.

The Noisette Rose Study Project is one of the programs connected with the 9th International Heritage



Rose Conference, to be held at Charleston from October 14th through 18th, 2001. An estimated three hundred fanciers of old roses, both professional and amateur, are expected to travel to the city from around the world to attend the program. Recent venues for the conference have included New Zealand, Australia, California, England, and, coming up in 1999, Lyon, France.

The first Noisette Rose originated about 1810 in the Charleston garden of John Champneys, a plantation owner. His rose, which came to be called 'Champneys Pink Cluster', resulted from cross-pollination of the ancient Chinese garden rose, 'Parson's Pink China', by the Musk Rose, *Rosa moschata*. The variety was a popular novelty because of its large clusters of flowers (sometimes as many as one hundred in a pyramidal raceme) and because of its tendency to bloom repeatedly through the summer and fall, a rare habit among roses of that time.

Subsequent breeding and selection expanded 'Champneys Pink Cluster' into an entire class of roses that were popular in gardens around the world by the 1840s. A Champneys neighbor, Philippe Noisette, sent plants and seedlings of 'Champneys Pink Cluster' to his brother Louis, a French nurseryman. The Noisette nursery had great success in breeding and introducing improved varieties of the class, so that they came to be known as Noisette roses. This early hybrid group was important to the breeding of later types of roses, including Hybrid Perpetuals, Teas, and Hybrid Teas.

Last fall, an enthusiastic volunteer team began planting a Noisette Rose Trail throughout the city of Charleston. As the roses grow and mature into long-blooming shrubs and climbers, they will become a permanent addition to the city's greenery. A brochure is planned to lead people on a walking tour along the trail.

Three plants each of approximately eighty varieties of Noisette roses will be planted in the study plot, which is scheduled to be maintained through 2002. Volunteers will plant and care for the roses and, starting in September 2000, will evaluate them. The project is being overseen by local rosarian Ruth Knopf and John Fitzpatrick, a Cornell University graduate student and former director of Monticello's Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants.

The roses will be evaluated for amount and size of bloom, fragrance, color, susceptibility to disease, vigor, plant size, and other characteristics. A taxonomic study of the plants is expected to provide variety names for some of the "found" Noisette roses and to uncover any duplicate names of varieties in commerce. In a further effort at understanding the Noisettes, the study plants will be



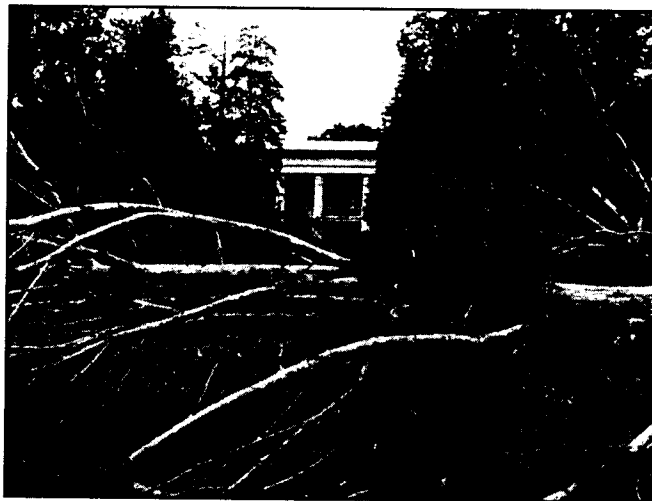
Rosa moschata 'Nastarana.' Illustration by Léonie Bell from *The Fragrant Year*, 1967.

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Donations of plants for the study are now being solicited from individuals and nurseries. Of particular interest are Noisette-type roses that have been found at old gardens and cemeteries. To donate plants or to volunteer for the Study Project, write to John Fitzpatrick at 322 Titus Avenue, Ithaca, NY 14850, or telephone (607) 256-7454. For more information on the conference, write the Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, P. O. Box 975, Charleston, SC 29402, or telephone (843) 805-3088. ♣

The picturesque front lawn was particularly hard hit. Left toppled in the storm's wake were dozens of cedar trees that lined the driveway to the mansion, many of them planted by Jackson in the 1830s. Also irreplaceable were three 200-year-old trees: a tulip poplar, a walnut, and the largest beech tree in Davidson County. A magnolia tree in the garden crashed into the gate surrounding the tomb of Andrew and Rachel Jackson, narrowly missing the Greek-style monument constructed in 1831.

If you would like to make a financial contribution to help "Replant the Past," please write to: The Hermitage: Home of President Andrew Jackson, 4580 Rachel's Lane, Hermitage, TN 37076. For more information contact Bunny Blackburn, Development Director at The Hermitage at (615) 889-2941. ♣



Cedar trees planted by Andrew Jackson lie toppled on the front lawn.

Two Exhibitions and a Book

by Davyd Foard Hood, Isinglass, Vale, North Carolina

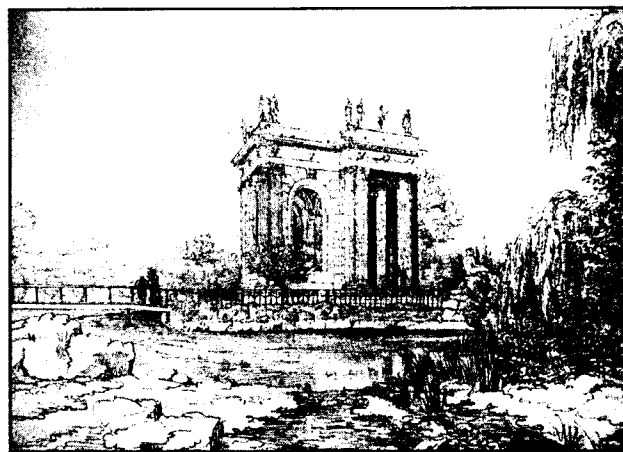


Frequent visits to Charleston have been a mainstay in the travel schedules of many society members; the Southern Garden History Society celebrated its tenth anniversary there in 1992, and Jim Cothran's *Gardens of Historic Charleston* was reviewed in these pages and stands on many of our shelves. Charleston's rich architectural, cultural, social, and garden history engages both the imagination and the intellect, attracting visitors back, again and again, on trips from which we come away renewed in our appreciation of a city to which we have ties, whether or not we were born in the city or state.

Two exhibitions at the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, one just closing and another to open September 5th, are further reason to visit. "The Poetry of Place: Landscapes of Thomas Coram & Charles Fraser" began its run at the museum in October 1997 but escaped attention until notice of its extension through August 16th came our way. Small elegant watercolors of Charleston and the Low Country by Charles Fraser (1792-1860) are important records of their time and place, just as his miniatures record the proud and usually handsome likenesses of their owners and other citizens of early nineteenth-century Charleston. This small show, sympathetically mounted in one of the smaller galleries in the museum, places Fraser's works, and those of his teacher Thomas Coram (1756-1811), a native of Bristol, England, who came to Charleston in 1769, in the context of their appreciation for English essayist and painter William Gilpin and his role in promoting the picturesque movement; four of Gilpin's influential books are displayed here as are Coram and Fraser's copies of particular plates therein. This intimate and jewel-like show was organized to address those relationships, the influence of the English picturesque on their artistic development, and to highlight significant holdings in the Gibbes Museum and other South Carolina collections. It also reminds the viewer of the picturesque movement's important impact on English garden design in the eighteenth century and the role of these small oil and watercolor views in documenting the gardens and grounds of Charleston and the surrounding countryside.

The show is almost evenly divided between Coram and Fraser. Coram's oil on paper sketches, many of which are taken from his "Sketchbook from Nature" of 1792 are warm and golden in tone. The plantation of Charles Glover in St. James Parish, Goose Creek, is well represented, and the show includes Coram's posthumous (1794) portrait of Mrs. Glover who died in 1791. While most of the works exhibited were removed from the artists'

sketch books and are simply displayed, the show includes a series of seven views, six illustrating the seat of Thomas Radcliffe, which remain mounted in their original black glass and gilt frames as, apparently, they were first displayed in Mr. Radcliffe's town residence. A difference in medium accounts in part for the appearance of Charles Fraser's cool, elegant watercolor and ink sketches: they capture a diverse group of churches, houses, fields, and landscapes linked by location, time, and family; most were taken from his "Sketchbook" of 1796-1806. One of the most important of these is the view of Wigton, the seat of the artist's brother James Fraser, where a walk is lined with symmetrical plantings and beds, and shrubs—possibly the recently-introduced camellia—in bloom. The show also partners Fraser's 1832 watercolor on ivory miniature of his brother-in-law Joseph Winthrop with a view of his seat in Goose Creek and includes a like pairing of the Fraser family's ancestral place in Prince William Parish with his portrait miniature of his eldest brother Frederick Fraser who inherited it.



Temple of Aesculepus in the Villa Borghese, 1822

"The Poetry of Place" is being succeeded at the Gibbes Museum on September 5th by "The Roman Remains: John Izard Middleton's Visual Souvenirs, 1820-1823." The Charleston showing, through January 31st, 1999, is the second venue for this important premiere showing of forty-nine recently rediscovered pencil, pen, and wash works, which originally opened at the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina. In advance of the Columbia exhibition the University of South Carolina Press published a book of the same name with an annotated catalogue of the drawings and essays by Charles R. Mack and Lynn Robertson.

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Two Exhibitions and a Book ...

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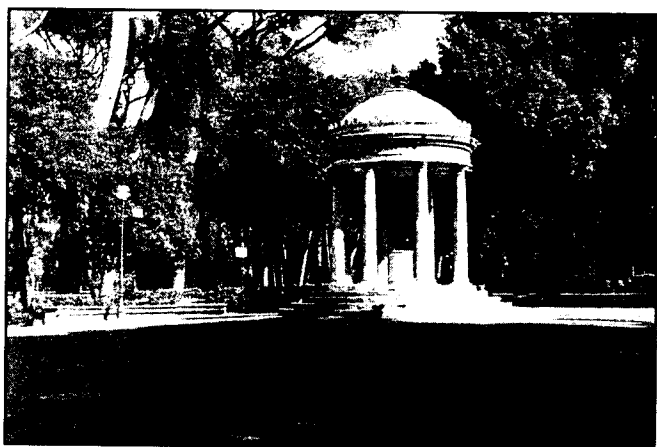


John Izard Middleton (1785-1849), the second son of Arthur Middleton (1742-1787) and the grandson of Henry Middleton, was born at Middleton Place where his grandfather had begun the creation of the family's gardens in the mid-eighteenth century. Like his father, who died when John Izard was only a lad of two, he was educated in England and graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1803 (or 1804). The details of Middleton's life, lived largely as an expatriate in England and on the Continent where he died in Paris in 1849, remain tantalizingly vague and unconfirmed as Mack and Robertson note. He left important works of art, however, which document a learning, sensitivity, and talent enhanced by education abroad and the cultivated circles in which the wealth of his family allowed him to move.

Apparently Middleton did not return to the United States after leaving Cambridge; instead he took up travel and study of the antique that would occupy him for the remainder of his days. By 1807 he was sufficiently well-



Villa Borghese (Temple of Diana), 1822



known to Madame de Staël that he became a guest at her estate outside Coppett in Switzerland. He was in Italy during the period from 1807 to 1809 where he would have enjoyed the company of another South Carolina expatriate artist, Washington Allston, also an acquaintance of Charles Fraser. During these years he undertook the travel and study of classical antiquities displayed in *Grecian Remains*, which holds a publication date of 1812, but was issued over a long period extending as late as 1825.

In 1810 Middleton was married in Paris to Eliza Augusta Falconnet, a woman of Swiss and American ancestry. The couple returned to Charleston and established themselves at Cedar Grove, an Izard Family plantation, across the Ashley River from Middleton Place, which his elder brother Henry had inherited. It is tempting to speculate on what improvements both John Izard Middleton and his brother might have made to the gardens and grounds at Cedar Grove and Middleton Place, respectively, as a result of his decade-long residency in England, France, and Italy. Also intriguing are questions as to what society John Izard Middleton might have enjoyed from 1810 to 1816 with Charles Fraser, his near contemporary in age, who was then practicing law in Charleston.

At Mrs. Mary Izard Middleton's death in 1814, John Izard Middleton was her principal heir and he came into a fortune, which allowed him to spend the rest of his life as he wished. In 1815 the couple's only child, a daughter, died. In 1816 he and his wife returned to Europe where he would live until his death. The drawings forming the collection now published as *The Roman Remains*, and soon to be exhibited in Charleston, were made during travels in Italy during the years from 1820 to 1823 with an exactness to architectural detail that distinguishes his drawings and observations in *Grecian Remains*. Middleton's views of "Roman remains," together with other Italian sketches, two views of Les Charmettes, and a view of Voltaire's chateau at Ferney, altogether comprising forty-nine drawings, are reproduced with annotations by Professor Mack. They are enhanced by contemporary quotations by literary figures, travel writers, and others who walked the paths and savored the views recorded by Middleton. John Izard Middleton made at least eight drawings at the Villa Borghese where, Madame de Staël wrote, "of all the Roman gardens and palaces, the splendors of nature and the arts are gathered with the most taste and brilliance." Many of Middleton's views are accompanied by recent black and white photographs taken

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Two Exhibitions and a Book ...

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from the artists vantage point by Professor Mack, which demonstrate the lengths to which the environments of these antiquities have changed in the intervening 175 years.

Although John Izard Middleton's evocative sketches of Roman scenes—her buildings, gardens, and countryside—lay in obscurity until very recently, he must be acknowledged as one of the first of a series of American artists in the nineteenth century who so carefully studied and recorded the classical Italian landscape. While the extent to which his appreciations found expression at Cedar Grove, Middleton Place, or elsewhere is unknown, and his possible role in the history of Southern gardening has yet to be defined, the influence of others who followed in his footsteps at the close of the century is well known. During those years Charles Eliot Norton (1827-1908), a classicist and the first professor of art history at Harvard University (1874-1898), became a founder and first president of the Archaeological Institute of America. Citing Middleton's scholarly and artistic accomplishment in the *Grecian Remains*, Norton hailed him as "The First American Classical Archaeologist" in an appreciation published in the first issue of the institute's organ, the *American Journal of Archaeology*, in 1885, on the centennial of Middleton's birth. Whether Charles Platt, the classical architect and garden designer, was familiar with the *Grecian Remains* when he first traveled to Italy in the spring of 1886 is not known; however, in 1892 when Platt was to return to Italy for a longer visit with his brother William, then training in the office of Frederick Law Olmsted, Olmsted wrote to Professor Norton asking him to advise William Platt on the trip. "Norton had been a critical advocate of Italian culture for nearly four decades," writes Keith N. Morgan, the author of *Charles Platt, The Artist as Architect*, "and [he] was the obvious counselor for the Platt tour (Platt, *Italian Gardens*, reprinted with an overview by Keith N. Morgan in 1993, p. 99)." Nevertheless, Morgan concludes that the extent to which Norton might have influenced the brothers' travels remains unknown. William Platt drowned in the summer of 1892 shortly after the brothers returned to this country. Two years later, in 1894, Charles Platt's *Italian Gardens* was published and became, as Morgan notes, "the first illustrated publication in English on this topic and the launching pad for Charles A. Platt (1861-1933) as the premier American practitioner of the formal garden revival (*Italian Gardens* reprint, p. 97)."

Italian Gardens became an important influence on American architectural and garden design as did Edith Wharton's *Italian Villas and their Gardens* of 1904. Both works, particularly Platt's, were critical in the career of



Modern ruin in the Villa Borghese (*The Temple of Faustina*). 1822



Neel Reid who would design a small brilliant group of classical houses and gardens for Georgia clients before his early death. John Izard Middleton's *The Roman Remains*—the book and the exhibition—remind us that a learned appreciation of Italy and the antique existed in the South a century before Reid and others planted "Italian gardens" in Southern soil. A real debt of gratitude is owed to Professor Mack and Lynn Robertson for bringing both to view.

"The Roman Remains: John Izard Middleton's Visual Souvenirs, 1820-1823" will be on view at the Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston, from September 5th, 1998 through January 31st, 1999. *The Roman Remains—John Izard Middleton's Visual Souvenirs of 1820-1823*, edited with essays and catalogue commentary by Charles R. Mack and Lynn Robertson. University of South Carolina Press, 1997. ISBN 1-57003-169-X, \$39.95. Contact Kim Patterson at (803) 777-2021. ♣

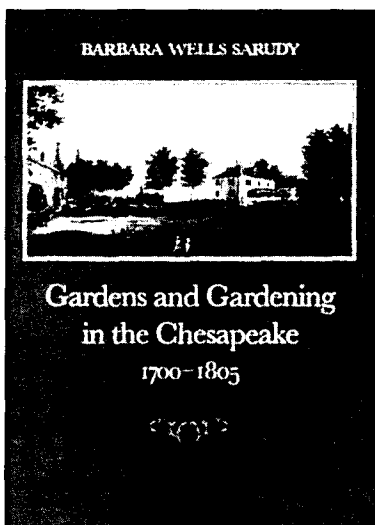


Gardens and Gardening in the Chesapeake: 1700-1805.

Barbara Wells Sarudy. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. 206 pages. ISBN 0-8018-5823-2.

No one with an interest in the southern landscape of the Revolutionary War era should miss this new offering by Southern Garden History Society board member Barbara Wells Sarudy. Even those drawn to a later period will find this book valuable since the Chesapeake region was a testing ground for landscape concepts that spread with Chesapeake settlers, their descendants, and the plantation system throughout much of the South.

Some of Sarudy's points about the Chesapeake landscape are well established. It is often observed, for example, that most American gardens of this period had formal plans. Interest in naturalistic design concepts was an impulse prominent in England, but on this side of the Atlantic geometry ruled in a highly visible fashion. There was plenty of wild terrain in America, and thus one's garden should overtly demonstrate an ability to shape and control nature.



This well-illustrated book provides many examples of such shaped and controlled gardens in the Chesapeake region. Normally laid out with parterres, they often took advantage of ground that sloped to a shoreline to create terraced "falls." Site plans drawn from various sources are joined by text descriptions to offer insight about the owners, their occupations, and the uses they made of their gardens. In a manner

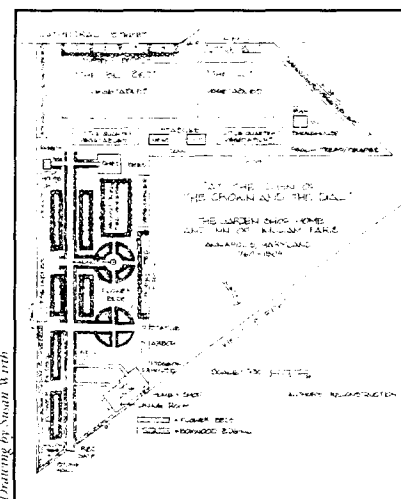
that was uniquely American, those gardens often joined "showy" overall designs, which made powerful statements about their owners with uses that were quite utilitarian in nature. (Chapters on "The Republican Garden" and on "Inspiration and Expression" help readers understand the intellectual, social, and economic "whys" and "hows" of such landscape manipulation.)

Thus useful for its review of design and influences on design, this book also offers a helpful look at the physical materials that went into Chesapeake gardens, their sources, and the laborers who installed them. For example, readers get a good look at the plants (purely decorative as well as edible and medicinal) that were being used by Chesapeake gentry and town gardeners alike, and at the mechanisms of regional plant distribution. One sees, for example, how traditional methods of

plant sharing among gardeners were supplanted first by importation of materials, and later by American commercial seed and nursery operations such as that of Baltimore's William Booth. (The same social class that produced these new garden entrepreneurs also offered a growing market for their products.) Not surprisingly, much of the labor used to install such plants came from enslaved Africans and their descendants. However, free blacks and indentured servants also played crucial roles—many of the latter group being professionally-trained gardeners from both the British Isles and continental Europe.

The gardens they tended had complex purposes, not the least important of these being social in nature. This was true of private gardens, which obviously offered spaces conducive to small family activities and to large group gatherings alike. However, one of the most interesting Chesapeake garden types discussed is the public garden, a forerunner of such modern-day complexes as the theme park. Numbers of for-profit gardens existed in Baltimore and its environs during the period in question. Sarudy examines them as to clientele served, layout of the grounds, services provided, and types of special occasion activities such as July 4th celebrations. Their role in serving citizens unable to afford the elaborate grounds of the area's upper

classes is especially interesting and complements a main theme of the book: the impact in the Chesapeake region of a growing middle class and the related transformation from an economy dominated by agriculture to one whose leading elements were commerce and manufacturing. Gardens and the landscape in general had perforce to change as well.



Map of William Faris' garden, Annapolis. Faris used straight paths and walkways to form the skeleton of his gardens and grounds, which nearly filled a triangle bordered by Cathedral and West streets.

While large public gardens and the landscapes of the Chesapeake gentry are examined at some length in this book, there is less discussion in general on the gardens of ordinary citizens. Readers will then appreciate all the more the authors extensive examination of the gardening activities of Annapolis craftsman-innkeeper William Faris, whose diary and account books survive in the archives of

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Preserving Jefferson's Gardens and Landscapes

*The Second Annual Historic Landscape
Institute, Sponsored by the University
of Virginia and Monticello*

by Kenneth M. McFarland, *Magnolia* Associate Editor

There are still places that inspire awe—even in an age of constant sensory bombardment. For some individuals such a place is Charlottesville, Virginia, or at least those parts of Charlottesville where the architectural and landscape worlds (can they truly be separated?) of Thomas Jefferson survive largely intact. Thus, a two-week Thomas Jefferson historic landscape institute can be enticing beyond imagination—even if one can only sit in for several days, as was the case for this observer.

It was immediately apparent that attending the Institute meant being fully embraced by Jeffersonian landscapes. Program organizers facilitated that sensation tremendously by allowing participants to lodge in a room on the Lawn—the earliest form of student accommodation at Thomas Jefferson's "academical village." From their small, minimally outfitted, rooms Institute students stepped out daily into what remains one of this country's most remarkable spots of ground, a campus still strongly reflective of the educational-architectural-landscape vision of its founder. They could ponder this setting but briefly, however, since their two weeks were filled with a series of activities that would have made Monticello's sage proud.

Appropriately, Monticello's director of gardens and grounds Peter Hatch began the event with an introduction to



Peter Hatch (center) with Institute participants at Breemo Plantation.

one of the very core issues of the Institute: Thomas Jefferson the gardener and Monticello, his principal gardening canvas.



Thoroughly to their credit, however, program organizers consistently ensured that participants were provided a broad context in which to set the specific information they were provided on Jefferson-related topics. Thus Peter Hatch's morning talks were followed by an afternoon look by architectural historian Marie Frank at the "Cultural History of the Enlightenment."

Similarly, on the following day a detailed on-site examination of the university campus by university landscape architect Mary Hughes and her colleagues, was joined by a



Students walking through the gardens

presentation by Colonial Williamsburg's landscape architect Kent Brinkley who provided a "Williamsburg Perspective" on the colonial Virginia landscape of Jefferson's earlier years. The setting was one of the original university pavilions, and a more inspiring spot to learn about the institution and its design could not be imagined. Nor could there be a better place from which to sally out for a tour of the campus landscape and building interiors. The first day at the university closed with a visit to the fine arts library where arrangements had been made for registrants to have borrowing privileges, a feature of the Institute which typified the thoroughness of its organizers in maximizing the learning opportunities available to participants.

Subsequent activities followed an established pattern: certain days were spent at Monticello and surrounding areas, and other days saw students at the University. Formal presentations continued as well, some being highly specific to Thomas Jefferson and others looking at contextual matters. The methodology of landscape study, along with preservation theory, also received substantial attention, talks being offered on landscape archaeology, cartography and map reading, and

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In Print...
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"Mountain Heritage: Biltmore Estate and the Blue Ridge..."
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the Maryland Historical Society. Indeed, anyone with a particular interest in Maryland garden history will find this an especially valuable publication: while its title encompasses the broad region defined by the reaches of the Chesapeake Bay, it is chiefly focused on the colony and state of Maryland, the author's home and her main base of research. For most readers this will not detract from the value of her work. Similarly, such errors as placing Virginia's Westover *across* the James River from Williamsburg (it is actually upriver from Williamsburg and on the same side of the James), and the use of the term "horticulturalist" instead of the correct "horticulturist" will be found minimally distracting considering the overall worth of the book. The author's findings are well documented in endnotes; numerous black and white images, and color plates, illustrate the text; and there is a helpful appendix of plants William Faris was growing between 1792 and 1804, and produce he was buying between 1790 and 1804, material which, like this book as a whole, will surely be appreciated by most *Magnolia* readers. ✦

– Reviewed by Kenneth M. McFarland,
Magnolia Associate Editor

UNC-A Botanical Garden, the Pisgah National Forest, and the historic communities of Asheville. Some members opted to return on their own to Biltmore. Surely, one day was not enough to take in this grand American estate. ✦

– Peggy Cornett, *Magnolia* Editor



Ornamental lake at the end of the Glen at the Biltmore Estate.

Dr. William C. Welch, *President*
Peter J. Hatch, *Vice-President*
Flora Ann Bynum, *Secretary-Treasurer*

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Deadline for the submission of articles for the fall issue of Magnolia is September 30th.

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Preserving Jefferson's Gardens and Landscapes ... Landscape Institute



guidelines for making landscape preservation decisions. The stellar cast of presenters included landscape architect and garden historian Rudy Favretti; landscape architect and University of Virginia lecturer, Will Rieley; archaeologists Barbara Heath and Fraser Neiman; landscape historian Barbara Sarudy; Monticello's Director of Restoration Bill Beiswanger; and former Director of Research at Monticello Ann Lucas.

Gardening is largely a dirt-under-the-nails affair, even in this sometimes rarefied atmosphere. Institute students experienced this aspect of Jefferson's world at both the university and Monticello, as well as at Tufton Farm's Center for Historic Plants where they labored under the tutelage of center director Peggy Cornett. Of course, the landscape world of our third president extended far beyond Charlottesville. Accordingly, participants were given a look at one of the most important of such Jefferson sites on a trip to Poplar Forest, near Lynchburg. The fortunate group also visited Breemo Plantation, the home of Jefferson's colleague John Hartwell Cocke. Still in private hands, Breemo is located on the James River a short drive south of Charlottesville. Cocke's principal dwelling is one of this nation's premier Palladian structures.

By the close of the Institute on Friday, June 26th registrants had been given as thorough a "grounding" in the landscapes of Thomas Jefferson, and in the techniques used to study those landscapes, as could be imagined for a two-week period of study. Theirs was more than an exposure to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century domain of Jefferson, however, for they also gained an inside perspective on one of America's most impressive late twentieth-century experiments in historic landscape study and restoration. This was reinforced repeatedly by working with Mary Hughes at the University of Virginia; Peter Hatch and his staff at Monticello; and Peggy Cornett at the Thomas Jefferson

Center for Historic Plants. *Magnolia* readers are advised to be watchful for news of the 1999 Institute—it is hard to imagine how a student of landscape history could spend two weeks more productively.

For more information about the Institute, or to be put on next year's mailing list, please contact The International Center for Jefferson Studies, Monticello, P.O. Box 316, Charlottesville, VA 22902; (804) 984-9864, fax (804) 296-1992. ✦



Landscape Institute students at Breemo

William T. Smith

The Virginia Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (VA-ASLA) announced the recent election of one of its members, **M. Kent Brinkley**, of Williamsburg, as a Fellow in the national society. An ASLA member since 1979, Brinkley has served the Virginia Chapter as an officer and as chapter president. He is currently serving again as president-elect, and will serve a second term as the chapter's president beginning in October. For the past thirteen years, he has served as landscape architect for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Williamsburg.

Windee Willoughby recently joined the **Goodwood Museum & Gardens** staff in Tallahassee Florida as the director of horticulture. She is responsible for Goodwood's extensive volunteer program as well as restoration of the landscape to its turn-of-the-century appearance.

Atlanta landscape architect **William T. Smith** was featured in the April issue of *Southern Living* on his design of Margaret Deimling's "Secret Garden."

Benefactor	\$250	Joint/husband-wife	\$30
Patron	\$150	Individual	\$20
Sustainer	\$75	Student	\$5
Institution/Business	\$30		
Life membership	\$1,000 (one time)		

The membership year runs from May 1st to April 30th. Members joining after January 1st will be credited for the coming year beginning May 1st. Write to membership secretary at: **Southern Garden History Society, Old Salem, Inc., Drawer F, Salem Station, Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27108, phone (910) 721-7328.**