

Magnolia

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

Bulletin of the
Southern Garden
History Society

Vol. X

No. 2

Winter 1994

Swept Yards, Dung Heaps and Mud: Balancing the Images of the Past with the Needs of the Present

by Darrell Spencer, Director of Horticulture, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC

Much discussion within the field of historic preservation centers on the topic of landscape restoration. However, relatively little attention is paid to how that landscape is to be maintained once its initial restoration is complete. In fact, the



A view of Church Street in Salem from the South, circa 1870. Photo courtesy of Old Salem, Inc.

entire concept of historic landscape maintenance may initially seem somewhat ironic - an attempt to preserve an historical image of nature despite its tendency to change and evolve over time. How does one attempt, in this modern age of automated landscape gadgetry, increasing labor costs, personal liability litigation, and rising consumer expectations, to maintain a period landscape at an historic site without jeopardizing the requirements for safe

visitor access, opportunities for recreation and learning, and the continued well-being of the associated structures?

Continued on page 2 . . .

**Inside
this
Issue**

Page 5	Old Salem Conference
Page 7	McMurrin's Melrose: A Patient Treasure
Page 9	Upcoming SGHS Annual Meeting

Calendar

January 21st-23rd, 1994. Garden Dreams, A Winter Garden Experience, celebrates 125 years of gardening at Mohonk Mountain House National Historic Landmark. Lectures include "History of Gardens in the Hudson River Valley." For information write Mohonk Mountain House, Lake Mohonk, New Paltz, NY 12561, or call (914) 255-1000.

March 26th, 1994. Perennials Conference at Cheekwood Botanical Gardens in Nashville, Tennessee. A full day of speakers on design, garden features, and plant materials. Cost for the day will be \$35.00 with lunch optional. Co-sponsored by the Perennial Plant Society of Middle Tennessee. For further information contact Jacqueline Broughton (615) 353-2146.



April 22nd & 23rd, 1994. The Greenville (South Carolina) Council of Garden Club's Spring Garden Tour. The tour will feature five spectacular gardens of homes in the Green Valley area, including the Charles Daniel home, "White Oaks," with its early twentieth-century Williamsburg-style garden. Tickets are \$10.00 each in advance and \$12.00 the day of the tour. Lunch is \$5.00. Proceeds benefit the Kilgore-Lewis House which is on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information and tickets call Council Headquarters (803) 232-3040.

May 6th-8th, 1994. SGHS Annual Meeting in Williamsburg, Virginia (see article in this issue, page 9) ♦

Swept Yards

Continued from page 1

Historical landscapes are a diverse lot and no single answer provides the solution to landscape maintenance dilemmas at all sites, since each site is unique in its intended mission, interpretation, and time period. The formal Dutch influence evident within the Governor's Palace gardens at Williamsburg, Virginia contrasts greatly to the serene Civil War battlefields at Gettysburg and Appomattox Courthouse. Historic sites where living history is practiced daily, such as the Museum of American Frontier Culture in Staunton, Virginia or Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Massachusetts, offer landscape possibilities that could never be fully realized and would certainly seem inappropriate at Independence Hall in Philadelphia or the urban surroundings of Old Salem. Thus, strategies for historical landscape maintenance can and must vary widely.

Modern demands placed on historic sites are frequently beyond that for which they were originally intended. Many of our most famous historic properties were once private residences, never expected to receive the great numbers of people who now visit them nor the automobiles or buses which they must now accommodate. Safe visitor access and comfort are as much of a concern among museum administrators as visitor education and recreation. Increased competition

for visitation among historical museums and other tourist attractions fuels the incentive to meet the pre-conceived expectations of the visitor with picturesque landscapes, seasonal floral displays, and park-like surroundings, often at the expense of historical authenticity. Thoughtful landscape maintenance at such sites may sometimes become an exercise in compromise.

By taking a more comprehensive view of the role and importance of landscape maintenance within the context of historical property management, different landscape maintenance strategies may become apparent which meet the unique demands of the modern visitor while still maintaining a sense of historical integrity about the site. Since much of my experience in these matters has been gleaned from my association with Old Salem in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, I will use examples of how Old Salem addresses the maintenance of this late 18th- and early 19th-century landscape within its historic district.

Salem was originally established in the late 18th century as a Moravian congregation town. The community thrived as a unique cultural entity within the Piedmont backcountry of North Carolina well into the 1800s, at which time it began selling off much of its land holdings to the rapidly expanding population that was settling in and around the new industrial center of Winston, immediately to its north. By the mid-19th century the town ceased to function as a closed society

and began to slowly merge with its neighboring town, a process which culminated with the official joining of the two municipalities under one local government in the early part of this century.

It is the intent of Old Salem, Inc. to restore and preserve the unique character of this early Moravian town as it existed prior to 1857.

Today, Old Salem's historic district comprises of approximately 14 city blocks within the confines of a major modern corporate and industrial city, Winston-Salem. In addition to Old Salem, Inc., which operates the museum buildings associated with the town's early history, Salem is also home to the original Moravian church, which still hosts an active congregation; Salem College and Academy; numerous stores and restaurants; and a post office. Additionally, about two thirds of the restored houses are privately owned and occupied. Old Salem today is not a static collection of old buildings and artifacts, but rather a vital modern community within the confines of a larger city. This unique quality is part of the community's overall appeal and must not only be accommodated, but creatively utilized and enhanced as one considers the restoration and maintenance of the landscape within its historic district.

A clearly-stated landscape philosophy, including a maintenance policy, can provide direction for landscape restoration activities and function as a valuable planning tool for any historic site. Any institution must first establish an awareness of its own institutional identity. This ideal should be reflected within the landscape in order to enhance its overall mission. Old Salem's landscape philosophy does reflect a strong awareness of its individuality and its particular role within the museum field and among other historic sites.

Old Salem, Inc. recognizes the fact that the town is not the same place today as it was in the late 18th or early 19th century when it operated as a tightly-controlled and somewhat isolated religious community. Therefore, it is not the intent of the institution to recreate an exact reproduction of the historical landscape; that would not only be impractical considering the modern context of the community, but undesirable as well. Instead, the museum staff strives to re-create a landscape that is uniquely reminiscent of Salem's earlier appearance through the restoration or re-creation of documented landscape features which conform



to the town's modern usage. Although many historic landscape features have been painstakingly reintroduced, some features are intentionally omitted. For instance, swept yards are maintained at museum buildings,

but few Salem residents choose to give up turfgrass around their house in favor of bare earth. Likewise dung heaps and muddy roads as primary landscape features are conspicuously absent today. These decisions involve compromise on the part of historical authenticity to be sure, but their presence would otherwise probably be neither understood nor appreciated given the modern circumstances within the historic district.

Primary to Old Salem's landscape restoration process is a governing body which assists in many of the important landscape-related decisions, including the establishment of a landscape maintenance policy. The Landscape Restoration Committee includes the president of Old Salem, members of the executive board selected for their particular interest in the area of landscape restoration, Old Salem's horticulturist, the Director of Education, the Director of Restoration, and local representatives from the greater community who have particular expertise in matters relating to landscape architecture, horticulture, and historic properties management. This committee functions as an advisory board to the horticulturist, approves all major changes to the landscape, and insures that the museum's ideals and goals for landscape restoration and maintenance are followed.

Due to its urban surroundings and the variety of institutional entities present within the historic district, it is virtually impossible for Old Salem, Inc. to exercise complete control over all visual elements. Therefore, concentrated efforts to enhance the historical landscape are directed toward areas where they can have the biggest impact and do the most good. The creation of historical landscape vignettes throughout the district is one strategy for highlighting or accenting those aspects of the landscape that can be controlled while ignoring or drawing attention away from the undesirable visual elements over which there is little or no control.

Another maintenance strategy involves the careful masking of modern elements within the landscape. Wood piles, beehives, barrels, fencing, and plantings can all be used to disguise modern features such as heating and air-conditioning units, electrical transformers, cable television

junction boxes, and gas meters. Likewise, the use of historical paint colors can also render obtrusive elements less offensive. Traditional materials, such as wood or masonry, applied to a modern context as in the construction of wheelchair access ramps, storm drains, or visitor safety constraints may provide a modern function while still protecting the historical view.

The landscape maintenance policy at Old Salem allows for and encourages the use of modern, labor-saving techniques and equipment in the daily management of the historic landscape. Although some living history demonstrations are an integral part of the museum's educational program, the landscape continues to be maintained by a variety of both traditional and contemporary means where appropriate. Today, a full-time staff of four gardeners and landscape maintenance technicians manage an area of approximately 64 acres which was once maintained by 400 inhabitants and is now visited by about 400,000 guests a year! The discrete use of riding mowers, weed eaters, and tractors is essential for accomplishing this difficult task.

Traditional landscape patterns and property lines are rigorously protected and maintained wherever possible. Because all residential lots within Salem were originally required to be enclosed, fencing plays a major role in the recreation and maintenance of the historical landscape. Other traditional land-use patterns such as driveways, gardens, orchards, and yards are also preserved or re-created whenever the opportunity arises.

Historical types and varieties of plants are utilized almost exclusively throughout the properties that Old Salem controls and manages. Since many of the older varieties of fruits, vegetables, flowers, and woody ornamental plants are difficult to acquire through commercial sources, if available at all, a vigilant program of seed saving and propagation is required to keep the gardens and grounds in good order with appropriate types of plants.

Old Salem strives to maintain a pre-industrial or vernacular landscape appearance which more closely reflects the level of technology available to Salem's earlier residents. Some compromise is made today in the form of more regular mowing than was commonly performed, although most of the other trappings of post-industrial landscape maintenance such as foundation plantings, sheared broadleaf evergreen shrubs, deeply



mulched tree rings, pine bark nuggets, neatly edged walkways, weed-free turfgrass, and modern paving materials are avoided.

Central to all of Old Salem's restoration and maintenance endeavors is the continued

effort to collect all evidence of historical documentation and work from a foundation of knowledge rather than personal preference. A clear vision for the restoration of the historical landscape is continually re-defined and revised according to the current information available. Historical photographs, maps, landscape paintings, and other resources, including archaeological findings, are periodically reviewed in order to further clarify an institutional vision of the historical landscape which might accommodate the modern usage of Salem's historic district.

A good maintenance program for historical landscapes begins with a good landscape design which takes into consideration the intended modern uses, demands, and interpretation of the property. An institutional philosophy of landscape restoration, including maintenance guidelines, is a valuable asset when faced with difficult landscape-related decisions, and the counsel of a well-informed and involved landscape restoration committee can assist in negotiating the difficult compromises that are sometimes required at public sites. Specific strategies employed at Old Salem which may be appropriate to other sites include the creation of landscape vignettes, the careful masking of modern landscape elements, the discrete use of modern equipment, and the use of traditional materials within a modern context. Additional strategies such as the maintenance of traditional land-use patterns and the use of historically appropriate plants can also aid in the recreation of a pre-industrial or historical landscape appearance. It is also important to realize that landscape restoration, of which maintenance is a critical part, is never complete but rather an ongoing endeavor. A continued study of all available resources is necessary in order to further clarify a personal vision of the historical landscape +

[This article was part of a paper presented at the Southeast Regional Meeting of The National Park Service in Atlanta, August 1993.]

Old Salem Conference Explores Diversity of Southern Cultural Landscape

by Ken McFarland, Stagville Center, Durham, NC

The South is a region of great geographical breadth, possessing a long, complex history. It is all too easy, therefore, to develop a localized, short-term perspective that inhibits a holistic understanding of our past. Thus, this year's Old Salem program, "Many Peoples, Many Cultures: The Shaping of the Southern Landscape," was a reminder of the overall richness of our human/landscape heritage – a richness made immediately evident in an the opening address delivered by Dr. William Welch of Texas A&M University.

Of special importance, given the theme of this conference, several speakers discussed segments of the Southern population whose contributions have received limited attention. For example, Professor Richard Yarnell, of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, recalled that explorers and later settlers from across the Atlantic did not, after all, encounter a primeval wilderness. Instead they found a landscape often profoundly altered by long-time Native American



Georgia's Richard Westmacott described in rich detail how peoples from Africa have transformed the landscapes of the South. Drawing on his extensive research and using a remarkable array of photographs,

Professor Westmacott demonstrated that this process was both reflective of African origins, as well as of acculturative influences in the New World – this all leading to the creation of a truly African-American landscape.

Since the conference took place at Old Salem, it was impossible, of course, to overlook the impact of settlers from various parts of Europe on our Southern surroundings. Apropos of that setting, conference committee member Gene Capps drew on the extensive collection of Salem images to review the landscape history of North Carolina's Moravians, especially as it was reflected in their educational institutions. Greg Grant, of Lone Star Growers in San Antonio, highlighted another tie linking Northern Europe to the Southern landscape in his discussion of the



Salem in North America from the Southwest, circa 1819. Lithograph by W. T. Neubauser, Niesky, Silesia. Photo courtesy of Old Salem, Inc.

multifaceted, and still-apparent, influence of German immigrants on horticultural practices in

Texas.

In fact, the story of settlement by various European groups and their alteration of the landscape was addressed by the majority of conference speakers. Certain shared cultural values and landscape practices were thus evident among the subjects of all these presentations. Yet, since each group being examined was of a



whose work continues to be admired and emulated today. Such a lasting impact can also be seen in the landscapes created by Southerners of French background, a subject examined in depth by William Lake

Douglas of the Arts Council of New Orleans.

Using excellent visual material, including plans and elevations from the Notarial Archives, he

illustrated how the French landscape in New Orleans underwent a long-term transformation from the primarily functional to a landscape that, by the mid-nineteenth century, was incorporating many ornamental and recreational elements.

Landscape transformation issues were also central to a talk offered by Tony Dove, horticulturist from New Bern, North Carolina's Tryon Palace. In this case the issue facing Mr. Dove and his colleagues is whether to leave the Tryon Palace grounds in their 1950's historically-informed, but conjectural, state, or to undertake major changes guided by a recently-obtained early plan of the site. Mr. Dove clearly proved that the issue is far more complex than it might first appear.

Joined to this array of talks were several presentations by garden historian and horticulturist Scott Kunst of Ann Arbor, Michigan. In an evening lecture, he demonstrated that while a diversity of people

different nationality and since each confronted different terrains, there was also uniqueness in the landscapes they transformed. Susan Parker from the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board discussed how issues of self defense helped to determine the way at least some Spanish settlers shaped their surroundings. As Ms. Parker noted, the Spanish presence also led English colonists to create a landscape of defense as well, as was evident in the early layout of Charleston, South Carolina. Historic landscape architect Rudy Favretti, in turn, examined numerous other influences which affected English settlers and their descendants – ranging from the great landscape designers of eighteenth-century Britain to those noted gardeners and authors of the Victorian age

flowed here from overseas, there was an even greater array of plants coming from the Old World to the New. Later, in workshop sessions, he guided his audience in a step-by-step fashion through the basics of landscape restoration. A mainstay of the Old Salem conference, the workshop program also included presentations by Greg Grant on bulbs for the historic landscape. A mainstay, too, was the session where landscape restorationists from across the South shared the details – the successes and the failures – of their current projects. Add in tours of Old Salem's restored gardens (a cornerstone of the conference) and of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, and it is easy to understand why this, the ninth Old Salem conference, recorded the highest attendance level in its history ♣

McMurran's Melrose: A Patient Treasure

by Nan B. McGehee, Natchez, Mississippi

In May, 1990, the National Park Service acquired the antebellum estate, Melrose, located in Natchez, Mississippi. This property is the first of three sites of the recently created Natchez National Historical Park. Natchez NHP was established to "preserve and interpret the history of Natchez, Mississippi, as a significant city in the history of the American South." The park intends to interpret the sites and structures of Natchez and



McMurran married Mary Louisa Turner, the daughter of State Supreme Court Justice Edward Turner, in 1831. Through inheritance and business deals, he eventually acquired several hundred slaves and several thousand acres of land in Louisiana, Mississippi and Arkansas, establishing himself as a successful planter.

In 1841, McMurran contracted work on the suburban Natchez estate that he would call Melrose. When completed the estate consisted of 130 acres of land, a large Greek Revival mansion, service court and dependencies, quarters, stables, and barns. The architect, Jacob Byers of Hagerstown, Maryland, ensured that the imposing home with its white-columned portico would be well set by landscaping the grounds to look like an English manor. When travel writer T. K.

Wharton visited Natchez in 1851, he remarked that Melrose, with its sweeping expanse of green lawn, looked "for all the world like an English park." When McMurran's daughter-in-law, Alice Austen McMurran, referred to Melrose in her 1856 journal, she wrote: "In November we went south and spent the winter alternately in plantations and at Melrose, the residence of John's father, two and one half miles from



Melrose, circa 1900. Photo courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.

its surrounding area, with emphasis at Melrose being placed on the antebellum period.

Melrose, the 1840s Greek Revival estate of John T. McMurran, is exemplary of the days when cotton was king and the mansions of wealthy cotton planters dominated the Natchez landscape. John T. McMurran was born in Pennsylvania in 1801. He relocated to Natchez as a young man by 1825, eventually becoming a notable attorney and law partner of politically active John Quitman.

Natchez, Mississippi, and one of the most beautiful places of the many beautiful ones in the vicinity of Natchez."

The McMurrans furnished their home, inside and out, with the best of everything. They enjoyed twenty years of prosperity at Melrose before the Civil War ended their way of life. Although Natchez suffered little physical destruction during the war, the lifestyles of the wealthy planters were drastically altered. Property values fell. Incomes

based on the combination of cotton and slaves ceased to exist. The McMurrans, like most cotton planters, found themselves in debt and with an unsure future.

In December, 1865, the McMurrans sold their beautiful estate for \$38,000 to the Davis family of Natchez. For Melrose, this marked the beginning of a lengthy decline. The Davises considered Melrose merely an investment and never moved into the home. Forty-five years elapsed before anyone would again live in the mansion. During that period, two families of African-Americans, Jane Johnson and Alice Sims (former slaves of the Davises), lived as caretakers in the dependencies.

In 1901, Mr. Davis's grandson and sole heir, George Malin Davis Kelly, brought his new bride from New York to inspect his inheritance, Melrose. This young man had inherited four mansions, thousands of acres of farmland, and downtown Natchez properties that had been acquired by his cotton planter grandfather. According to family tradition, young Mrs. Kelly was delighted with her first glimpse of Melrose, so much so that the couple made plans to move to Natchez and make Melrose their home. From 1901 until 1910 the Kellys repaired the interior and exterior of the home for use as their residence. Jane Johnson, one of the caretakers living at Melrose, guided Mrs. Kelly in replanting the grounds, for she remembered where all the flowers, shrubs, and walking paths had been. In 1934 the Kellys opened Melrose to the public during the springtime Natchez Pilgrimage of historic homes. Mrs. Kelly, widowed in 1946, continued to reside in the home until her death in 1976. After her death, the estate was sold to the John Callon family of Natchez, who owned Melrose until its purchase by the Federal Government in 1990. During their residence changes were made to the grounds to accommodate modern living arrangements, bed-



and-breakfast guests, and daily house tours.

Through the years Melrose has stood patiently, a tribute to the McMurrans and a witness to a powerful and important era in the nation's history. Today, visitors are

welcome to enter the home and view a number of original furnishings, including the largest shoo-fly fan, or punkah, in the country, a one-of-a-kind conversational sofa, and original silk draperies in the drawing room. The home is situated on eighty acres, about thirty of which comprise the lawn and garden. Melrose has been described as one of the most complete antebellum-estate complexes in the country, and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1974.

The gardens and grounds, which are open at no charge, contain ancient live oaks, magnolias, crepe myrtles, gardenias, camellias, azaleas, and deutzias, all festooned with Spanish moss. The only remaining parterre garden in the area is located through the magnolias just south of the parlor windows. Original dependencies and a service court bring guests back to the reality of life in the 1800s, as they realize that over twenty slaves lived and worked only steps from the mansion's back gallery. Carriage house, stable, smokehouse, and privy give a hint that life was not as easy and charming as we would like to believe – even for the wealthy cotton planters.

The National Park Service, now responsible for this treasure, is working to ensure its preservation and restoration. This fiscal year will likely bring about the completion of the Historical Structures Report, the Historic Furnishings Survey, and the Cultural Landscape Survey. These studies will pave the way for a concerted effort to return Melrose to its former splendor. The house and grounds will be restored to interpret life in Natchez, when it once served as the cultural and financial center of the Cotton South. Melrose's long wait is about to end, as work begins anew ♦

Of Interest

Copies of *Magnolia Essays, Number One*, may be ordered from the SGHS headquarters in Old Salem for \$10.00 per copy, plus \$2.00 for handling and mailing. Titled "The Residential Work of the Olmsted Firm in Georgia, 1893-

1937," the forty-six page book is the first occasional paper of the Southern Garden History Society. A complimentary copy was mailed in April to all society members in good standing as of April 1st. If members know of book stores that would be interested in selling copies of *Magnolia Essays*, please contact society headquarters ♦

Upcoming SGHS Annual Meeting

by Lawrence Henry, Colonial Williamsburg

The Southern Garden History Society will go "In Search of the Colonial Landscape" when it



Other sessions will discuss current garden research techniques and the quite different re-creations of colonial gardens such modern approaches produce. Tours of the mansion and slave-quarter gardens at

Carter's Grove and the garden at nearby Bacon's Castle will help illustrate the difference.

The official program begins at 1 p.m. on Friday, May 6th, and concludes with dinner and a lecture on Saturday night. Two optional Sunday

tours are planned.

One will visit several plantations along the James River and the other will take registrants to Agecroft Hall, Virginia House, and the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond.

Those attending the annual meeting will receive complimentary admission tickets to all Colonial Williamsburg gardens, exhibition buildings, historic



Tulips and picket fences highlight the tiny Taliaferro-Cole garden in the historic area of Colonial Williamsburg. Especially popular with springtime visitors, this garden is located near the cooper shop where the barrel making trade is demonstrated. Photo courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, VA.

holds its twelfth-annual meeting in Williamsburg, Virginia, May 6th-8th, 1994.

Colonial Williamsburg will be the subject of much of the meeting as well as its site. Sessions will explore the profound influence Williamsburg's many Colonial Revival gardens, designed first by Arthur Shurcliff in the 1930s and later by Alden Hopkins, have had on the popular perception of the eighteenth-century landscape. Tours of these gardens conducted by Colonial Williamsburg landscape department staff will explore that topic further.

trade sites, Carter's Grove, the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Gallery, and the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center that will be valid from May 5th through May 8th.

A block of rooms and suites has been reserved at the Williamsburg Woodlands, adjacent to the Cascades Restaurant and Conference Center. Registration forms and complete program information will be sent to the membership in early January. Attendance will be limited to 150 members ♦

1993 Fall Board Meeting



Members In The News

At its fall meeting October 7th in Winston-Salem the SGHS board of directors voted to hold the 1995 annual meeting in Mobile, Alabama, April 21st-23rd. Board member Dr. Edgar G. Givhan II will be meeting chair. The 1996 annual meeting will be on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, with board member M. Edward Shull as chair. The exact date will be announced later.

Plans were reviewed for the 1994 annual meeting, to be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, May 6th-8th, with Lawrence Henry, director of museums for Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, as meeting chair.

The board passed a resolution expressing sympathy in the death on September 18th of Mrs. J. M. P. Wright (St. Clair) of Annapolis, Maryland, with deep appreciation for her work in the Society. Mrs. Wright was one of the founding directors of the Society, and served for a number of years as a member of the board. She was chair of the Society's third-annual meeting held in Annapolis in 1985 +

In September, **John T. Fitzpatrick** joined the staff of the Garden Conservancy as Projects Manager. In this newly created position, John is responsible for developing and managing the Conservancy's garden preservation projects. John has served on the Garden Conservancy's Screening Committee since its inception in 1989.

The November '93 issue of *Vogue Magazine* featured a piece on SGHS member **Peter Patout** and his home and courtyard deep in the heart of New Orleans's French Quarter +

Monticello Receives Grant for Thomas Jefferson Parkway

Monticello was recently awarded 1.5 million dollars from the federal government as part of the ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) program to begin construction of the Thomas Jefferson Parkway along 1.7 miles of Route 53 that serves as the entrance to Monticello. A matching gift of \$375,000 from R. Crosby Kemper of Kansas City will make Phase I of the project possible. The plan for the Parkway, defined as a roadway that runs through a linear park, includes three elements: aesthetic and safety improvements to

the roadway itself, a two-mile bicycle/hiking trail connecting the Thomas Jefferson Visitors Center and the Monticello entrance, and an 89-acre park that will contain hiking trails through a pristine oak forest, scenic overlooks, a pond, and a native tree and shrub arboretum. SGHS board member Peter Hatch, director of Monticello's gardens and grounds, was instrumental in spearheading this ambitious project which was conceived to commemorate Jefferson's concern for natural history and land preservation during the 250th anniversary of his birth. Construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 1994 +

In Print

Gardens and Landscapes of Virginia. Architectural and landscape photographer Richard Cheek and landscape historian Rudy Favretti have joined to produce this lavishly illustrated and informative record of Virginia's gardens and landscapes, including 33 restorations by the Garden Club of Virginia. Designed and published by the prestigious Fort Church Press. Hardcover and handsomely embossed in fine cloth. 144 pp. Copies may be ordered from The Garden Club of Virginia Restoration Committee, P. O. Box 24692, Richmond, VA 23224 . \$40.00 plus \$5.50 shipping and handling.

An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape edited by Colonial Williamsburg's architectural historian Carl R. Lounsbury with the editorial assistance of Vanessa Patrick. This essential reference of historical landscape and architectural terms is a much needed and long overdue resource. Garden historian Barbara Sarudy of Monkton,



Maryland and Jonathan Poston of Historic Charleston have made significant contributions toward the substantive content of this work. 430 pp. Published by Oxford University Press, New York. \$75.00.

Pioneers of American Landscape Design.

This annotated bibliography, edited by Charles A. Burnbaum with Lisa E. Crowder, combines in a single source book those visionary practitioners who have had a significant impact on the designed American landscape. These historical figures included landscape gardeners, horticulturists, nursery owners, landscape architects, engineers, planners, architects, cemetery designers, golf course architects, superintendents, educators, and writers. This is an invaluable tool for landscape historians and landscape architects alike when attempting to evaluate a property's significance or establish its historical context. A publication of the National Park Service, Preservation Assistance Division, United States Department of Interior. Copies may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402-9325 for \$10.00 through

Continued on page 12 . . .

Correction...



In the Fall Issue of Magnolia (Vol. X, No. 1) we failed to credit a photograph in our story "Roses of Natchez." The photo in question is of the Carpenter Family at Dunleith in Natchez, and it comes to us courtesy of Thomas H. and Joan Gandy +

In Print

Continued from page 11

January, 1994. For additional ordering information and to verify prices, please call (202)783-3238.

Passalong Plants by Steve Bender and Felder Rushing. This lively and often irreverent book includes descriptions of 117 passalongs, or "friendship plants" which generally can only be obtained from gardening friends and neighbors. A thoroughly enjoyable book which includes useful horticultural information and a mail-order source list for the heirloom plants described. Steve Bender is senior writer for *Southern Living*, and SGHS member Felder Rushing lives



in Jackson, MS where he writes and hosts radio and television gardening programs. 236 pp. Published by UNC Press, P. O.

Box 2288, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2288. \$16.95 paperback, \$29.95 hardcover ♦

Membership Dues

Second notices for 1993-94

membership dues were mailed the first of November. Members who do not respond to this second notice will be removed from the mailing list. Anyone who has questions about his membership status may write the Society headquarters ♦

Deadline for submission of articles for the Spring Issue of Magnolia is February 1st, 1994.

Florence P. Griffin, *President*
Ben G. Page, Jr., *Vice-President*
Flora Ann Bynum, *Secretary-Treasurer*
William Lanier Hunt, *Honorary President*
Magnolia grandiflora reproduced by courtesy of Rare Book Division, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library.

Editor:
Peggy C. Newcomb
Monticello, P.O.B. 316
Charlottesville, VA 22902
(804) 984-9816
Fax (804) 977-6140

Associate Editor:
Kenneth M. McFarland
Stagville Center, P.O.B. 71217
Durham, NC 27722-1217
(919) 620-0120
Fax (919) 620-0422

Southern Garden History Society
Old Salem, Inc.
Drawer F, Salem Station
Winston-Salem, NC 27108

FIRST CLASS
US POSTAGE
PAID
Charlottesville, VA
Permit No. 345



Magnolia

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

Bulletin of the
Southern Garden
History Society

Vol. X

No.3

Spring 1994

Cherchez le 'Musk'

by Liz Druitt, Washington, TX

The most exciting rose rescue story in recent years is the case of *Rosa moschata*, the true old autumn-blooming 'Musk Rose'. *R. moschata* is one of the parents of the most important American rose class, the Noisettes, which originated from a cross between this rose and the 'Old Blush' China rose in Charleston, South Carolina, in about 1811. It fell out of commerce both in America and England in the late 1880s because of a confusion of identity with another rose.

The 'Musk Rose' is presumably a species rose, though it has never been reliably documented in the wild. It must have been an early garden favorite, however, because it is described in all its late-flowering, musky-scented glory in a number of early botanists' works. John Gerard's *Herball* of 1597 and John Parkinson's *Paradisi in sole, Paradisus terrestris* of 1629 both include it, and Johann Herrmann gives so clear a botanical description of it in his 1762 'Dissertation' that the 'Musk Rose's' full Latin name is designated as *R. moschata* Herrmann, though the date of introduction is still kept at the traditional mid-1500s.

This true form of *R. moschata* has small white flowers, single or double, borne usually in corymbs of seven blossoms. These have a clean, musky fragrance said to be produced



Photo courtesy of
Ruth C. Knopf.

Continued on page 2 . . .

**Inside
this
Issue**

Page 5 The Wood Sorrels

Page 8 Call for Papers

Page 9 Restoration of the Anne Spencer Garden

Calendar

April 6th-8th, 1994. "African-American Landscape Symposium." The Landscape Architecture Program at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University will hold the first event of a unique symposia series addressing the history and roles of African-Americans in land-use planning and environmental design. The roster of speakers includes distinguished scholars and educators from Texas, the University of Michigan, the University of California at Berkeley, the National Park Service in Denver, Emory University in Atlanta, and the University of Georgia. SGHS member Richard Westmacott is among the speakers. For more information contact Dennis Nagae or Sue Anne Ware at (910) 334-7520.

April 10th-13th, 1994. The forty-eighth *Williamsburg Garden Symposium*: "Making Gardens." Speakers includes SGHS member Linda



Askey, garden writer and editor of *Southern Accents* and *Southern Living* magazines, and Brent Heath, owner of Daffodil Mart in Gloucester, Virginia. Sponsored by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in conjunction with the American Horticultural Society. For additional information, contact Deborah Chapman at (804) 220-8921.

April 11th, 1994. "Speaking for the National Parks: Women Advocates." A New England Garden History Society lecture in their Spring Series. Polly Welts Kaufman will speak on the role women have played in saving or preserving such national treasures as Mesa Verde, Joshua Tree National Monument, and Cape Cod National Seashore. Lecture begins at 6:30 p.m. in Horticultural Hall in Boston. For information contact Walter Punch at (617) 536-9280.

April 23th-24th, 1994. Mordecai Historic Park in Raleigh, North Carolina will host a plant

Calendar continued on page 10 ...

Cherchez le Musk *Continued from page 1*

by the fused styles rather than the petals, and this is probably why the scent lasts long enough to be carried so freely through the air around the plant. The fragrance can be enjoyed at quite a distance from the rose, especially on a lightly breezy day. Anyone walking past the plant in full bloom can understand why Shakespeare included it as part of the fragrant bower under which his fairy queen, Titania, slept. *R. moschata* is limited in height, rarely reaching its potential of 12 feet, so the plant has great flexibility for all sorts of landscape uses as a shrub or a climber. Most distinctively of all, it begins flowering very much later than most other roses, holding off until mid-summer for us in Zone

8, or until "autumn at the fall of the leaf" (Gerard) in colder zones, and it continues blooming for a very long period, seeming truly remontant.

While this is interesting, it wouldn't make much of a story if the 'Musk Rose' was not only attractive, historic and a very important rose parent, but well and truly lost. Nobody even knew it was lost for some time, because its place was taken by the imposter, *Rosa brunonii*, the 'Himalayan Musk' (now known as *R. moschata nepalensis*). The 'Himalayan Musk' is very similar to the true 'Musk Rose', except it is considerably more aggressive, climbing 30 to 50 feet in height

and surviving cold climates without flinching. The foliage is varied a little as well, but the most important difference is that *R. brunonii* flowers once only, in the late spring or early summer, and is long out of bloom by autumn. The 'Himalayan Musk' was described by botanist Dr. John Lindley after its discovery in Nepal in 1820, and the study specimen growing in London's Kew



1931, E.H. Wilson, the famous plant hunter, went so far as to write that it had "long been lost to cultivation."

That might have been the end of the line for this great rose, but fortunately in the 1930s there was a resurgence of interest in the older classes. At a time when only a few nurseries in Britain and America still offered a commercial selection of old roses, two rosarians came to the rescue. In her 1935 book, *Old Roses*, Mrs. Ethelyn Emery Keays spoke powerfully of the delights of heritage roses and issued a challenge to all her readers to be aware of the need to seek out and preserve the remaining historic varieties. At the same time, British rosarian Graham Stuart Thomas had become very interested in tracking down leads to one of the few remaining specimens of *R. moschata* in England. He ran it to earth in the late 1930s in the garden of the late E. A. Bowles (a well-known garden writer), after a series of detective



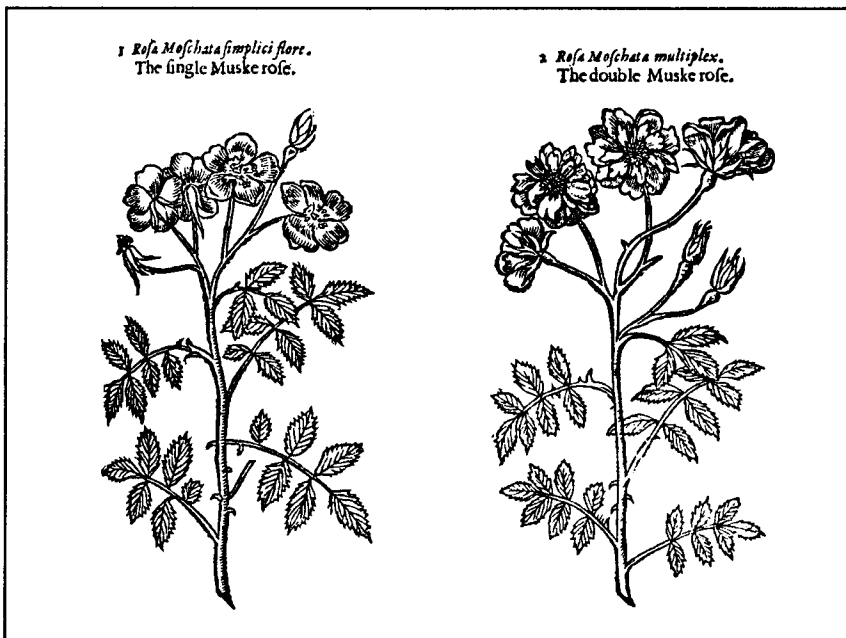
R. Moscata, Hillsborough, NC. Photo courtesy of J. H. Butler.

Gardens was still labeled *R. brunonii* as late as 1883.

Unfortunately for the true 'Musk Rose', the well-known Belgian botanist and rosarian Francois Crepin decided in the mid-1880s that *R. brunonii* should also be called *R. moschata*.

His prestige was great enough to get the labels changed on botanic garden specimens of *R. brunonii*, including the commonly studied plant at Kew Gardens. This had the effect of a successful magic trick – while attention was focussed on the 'Himalayan Musk', few even noticed that the autumn-flowering 'Musk Rose', the more tender of the two species, dropped right out of sight. In his 1927 *Cyclopaedia*, Bailey wrote that "the Musk Rose of the older writers, known since the 16th century, seems at present almost disappeared from cultivation." And in

operations which are described in his book *Climbing Roses Old and New* (1965). From this specimen and one other that Thomas found came a new generation of *R. moschata* in England, but the 'Musk Rose' was still missing in America.



Known to the Elizabethans, as Gerard's illustrations show, the true 'musk rose' was subsequently lost to cultivation until the 1930s.

It was some years later that American rose-lovers John and Marie Butler, already aware of Mrs. Keays' challenge, were so intrigued by Thomas' chapter on "The



originated from one of a pair of plants found by rosarians Carl Cato and Ruth Knopf during their exploration of the Burwell plot in the Elmwood Cemetery at Charlotte, North Carolina. The "Burwell Musk," as it was study-named, and the "Crenshaw Musk" appeared to be the same plant. Most interestingly of all, the Burwell and Crenshaw families turned out to be related.



Burwell Plot, Charlotte, NC. Photo courtesy of Ruth C. Knopf.

Mystery of the Musk Rose" that they decided to look for it themselves. They began to comb old gardens in their own area of Virginia, knowing that the region had been settled at a time when the true 'Musk Rose' was still commonly grown. They were not aware that a rooted cutting they'd recently been given of a rose found in North Carolina would turn out to be the very plant they sought, so they kept hunting.

The Butlers did get to find the 'Musk Rose' themselves, during a July 1985 rose-hunting expedition in tandem with Heritage Rose Foundation president Charles A. Walker, Jr., and his wife, Judy Holley. The plant that they discovered was about six feet high and blooming with both the single and double forms of the flower, as is common with *R. moschata*. They christened their find "Crenshaw Musk" for study purposes, since it was found growing on the Crenshaw family burial plot in the Hollywood Cemetery at Richmond, Virginia.

By this time, the previously mentioned cutting had bloomed in the Butler's garden and was actively identified as *R. moschata*. This cutting had

The rediscovery story became even more engrossing when it was learned through the old rose network that *R. moschata* had already been found as long ago as 1970 by Mrs. Helen Blake Watkins. She was not actively looking for it, but simply investigating the gardens of local historic sites in Hillsborough, North Carolina, in her role as Chair of the Horticultural Committee of the Hillsborough Historical Society. She discovered the 'Musk Rose' growing on the grounds of the old Burwell School, an institution started by yet another branch of the Burwell family back in 1837. Mrs. Watkins collected cuttings from the rose, which she identified as *R. moschata*, without realizing it was lost and needed any kind of fuss or announcement. Her specimens appeared identical to the other Burwell and Crenshaw roses. Mrs. Watkins was responsible for

Continued on page 11



The true 'Musk Rose', from Crispin van der Passe's Hortus Floridus.

The Wood Sorrel(s) of Southern Dooryard Gardens

by Arthur O. Tucker, Dover, DE

Several years ago I had the opportunity to visit Edenton, North Carolina in spring. One thing that I still remember is the pink and pale green of a wood sorrel (*Oxalis*) which carpets many dooryard gardens in northern North Carolina and southern Virginia. On returning to Delaware, I tried to find this wood sorrel in my horticultural manuals (which are mostly British), but I was never able to pin it down. Even Elizabeth Lawrence's *A Southern Garden* (1942) lists merely "Oxalis (common pink)" and "(common white)"

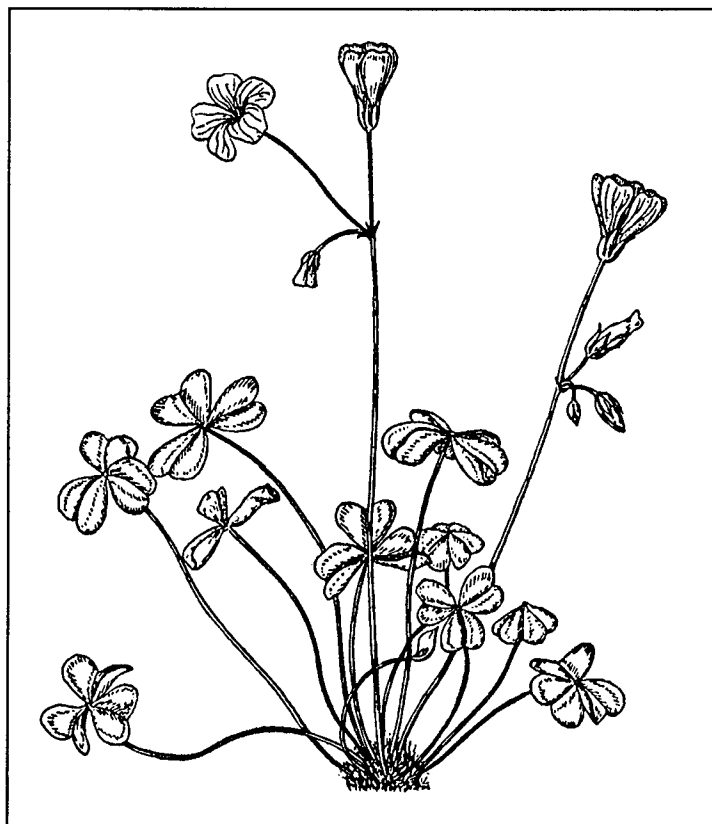


without any indication of a species.

In October I attended a Board of Directors meeting of The Herb Society of America in Annapolis, Maryland. A few of us went on a side trip to an herb nursery in Davidsonville, Maryland. In the perennial section of this nursery I found quart pots of "Old Fashioned Oxalis" with scattered blooms. From my dimmed memory, this was just what I had remembered in Virginia and North Carolina. When I purchased a pot I inquired as to the source and was told that it came from a private garden in Virginia. This form, I was told, is very spreading and tends to die back in the heat of summer. However, this nursery also sold me another form which tends to flower all summer long and does not die back during the heat of summer; this form also remains in nice tight clumps. This non-invasive form came from a private garden in Chincoteague, Virginia.

Back in my office, opening up my floras, I find this perennial pink wood sorrel keys out, for example, in H. A. Gleason's *The New Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada* (1952) as *Oxalis violacea*. Turning to Melinda Denton's *A Monograph of Oxalis, Section Ionoxalis (Oxalidaceae) in North America* (Michigan State Univ. Biol. Ser. Vol. 4, No. 10, 1973), this also keys out to *O. violacea*. This species is reported to occur in dry upland woods and prairies from Massachusetts to Michigan and South Dakota, south to Florida and Texas and flowering in April to June, occasionally later. Gleason also notes "Forms with white flowers and with pubescent petioles have been described."

At this point I wrote to Flora Ann Bynum



Oxalis violacea illustration from *New Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern United States*.

in Winston-Salem, NC and asked her what she knew about the old oxalis, called pink wood sorrel in the manuals. She really did her detective work and noted that both William C. Welch's *Perennial Garden Color for Texas and the South* (1989) and Steve Bender and Felder Rushing's *Passalong Plants* (1993) call this *O. crassipes*. In correspondence with Dr. Welch and Bill Hunt and further reading into Elizabeth Lawrence's books, Flora Ann deduced that the name *O. crassipes* arose from the catalog of Cecil Houdyshel's bulb nursery in California. Lawrence writes in *The Little Bulbs* (1957): "One of the commonest garden flowers hereabouts, and one of the most valuable, is an oxalis that I had been unable to identify with certainty until Mr. Houdyshel cast some light on it. He sent me what seems to be the same thing, identified as *O. crassipes*." Lawrence goes on further to describe it in more detail with culture and blooming times in both North Carolina and California. Flora Ann sent me three clumps of the pink wood sorrel from North Carolina, and all match the material



from Maryland/Virginia.

Well, okay, but turning to the *Manual of the Vascular Flora of the Carolinas* by A. E. Radford, H. E. Ahles, and C. R. Bell (1964),

this keys out to *O. rubra*, not *O. violacea* or *O. crassipes*. This is also in agreement with John Ingram's "The Cultivated Species of Oxalis. 2. The Acaulescent Species" (Baileya 7:11-22, 1959). Ingram casually mentions *O. crassipes* but dismisses it as a cultivated variant of *O. rubra*. *Oxalis crassipes* was originally described from cultivated material in the Botanical Garden of Berlin by Ignatz Urban in Friedrich H. G. Hildebrand's *Die Lebensverhältnisse der Oxalisarten* published in 1884. Walter C. Blasdale treats *O. rubra* in detail (*National Horticultural Magazine* 36:285-288, 1957) and says that *O. crassipes* (and *O. articulata* and *O. floribunda*) is closely related or identical to *O. rubra*. *Hortus Third* (1976) provides no characteristics unique to *O. crassipes* to distinguish it from *O. rubra*.

Michael Wright in *The Complete Handbook of Garden Plants* (1984) says the issue is even more

confused. He states that *O. rubra* is sometimes incorrectly sold as *O. rosea* or *O. floribunda*. Turning to *Hortus Third*, *O. floribunda* is listed as a synonym of *O. rosea*, while of *O. rosea*, a native of Chile, we read: "Probably much of the material cult. under this name is *O. rubra* cv. 'Delicata'. A listed name." Radford, Ahles, and Bell also cite the *Ionoxalis martiana* of Small as a taxonomic synonym of *O. rubra*. Aargh! This means that period references to *O. violacea*, *O. rubra*, *O. rosea*, *O. floribunda*, *O. crassipes*,



Oxalis rosea illustration from Henderson's Handbook.

O. articulata, and/or *I. martiana* (plus *O. arborea*, *O. alba*, and *O. lilacina*, see below) may all refer to the same species or perhaps three different species. For example, is the reference to *O. floribunda* in Edward Sprague Rand, Jr.'s *Flowers for the Parlor and Garden* (1870) actually our *O. rubra*? Rand describes it thusly: "A variety with short, fleshy stems, just serving to elevate the dense tuft of leaves and blossoms above the soil. Should be allowed to dry off during the winter and bedded out in summer, when it will bloom profusely for about four months. A native of Chili. Flowers rosy pink." Ingram treats *O. rosea* (alias *O. floribunda*) in a separate discussion (*Baileya* 6:22-32, 1958) as a caulescent (stemmed) species with pink flowers, and *Hortus Third* characterizes *O. rosea* as a long-stemmed annual and *O. rubra* as a tufted perennial. Rand describes a tufted perennial, and so this must be our *O. rubra* in cultivation in Massachusetts pre-1870. I also find *O. rosea* and *O. floribunda rosea* listed in Dreer's catalog (Philadelphia) for 1869 and *O. floribunda rosea* and *O. floribunda alba* listed in George W. Park's catalog (Libonia, PA) for 1895.

How early was *O. rubra* introduced and who introduced it? From my limited search of catalogs, I know it was available in the U.S. pre-1869, and Lawrence reports it very common in the south in 1957, so an early to mid nineteenth-century date of introduction is most likely. When I want to get a date for introduction into Great Britain, I turn to nineteenth century books by J. Donn, J.C. Loudon, or R. Sweet, but none of these books list *O. rubra*. However, Robert Sweet's *Hortus Britannicus* (Second ed., 1830) lists *O. martiana* introduced from Brazil in 1828.

The true *O. rubra* was named by August F. C.



P. de Saint-Hilaire, a French entomologist and botanist, who explored Brazil and Uruguay from 1816 to 1822 and published the three volume *Flora Brasiliae Meridionalis* in 1824-1833. *Oxalis rubra* is described on p. 124-125 in volume 1 published in 1825. He reports *O. rubra* (crudely translated here from the original Latin) as: "discovered on the shores of brooks near the village of Freguesia Nova, in part of the southern province of São Paulo as called Campus Geras. Flowering in March." Thus, Sweet's date of 1828 for *O. martiana* being introduced into Great Britain from Brazil might be a good working date for *O. rubra* too. Distinguishing characteristics of *O. rubra* are the copper dots on the edges of the three leaflets, a sinus in each leaflet from 1/3 to 1/2 the length, hairy sepals and peduncles, and a rhizome-like taproot with articulated tubers (not true bulbs) as offsets. Since *O. rubra* is in Section *Articulatae*, it would not be expected to be in Denton's revision cited above (even though it was once described as a species of *Ionoxalis* by Small). However, while Virginia is in the geographical area circumscribed by Gleason, this flora does not include *O. rubra*, and the key mentions neither bulbs versus rhizomes nor the copper dots. Ingram writes of the copper dots: "These spots are typical of this species and some other species of *Oxalis*, but they have been mistaken for the rust, *Puccinia oxalidis* (Lévl.) Diet. & Ell., which has been found on a few species of *Oxalis*." L. H. Bailey adds further information on *O. rubra* in his *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture* (Fifth ed., 1906): "A lilac-flowered form passes erroneously for *O. lilacina*, and white form for *O. arborea*, var. *alba* or *O. alba*; and *O. violacea* and *O. violacea* var. *alba* of the trade seem to be this species and its variety."

Blasdale calls *O. rubra* a "trimorphic species," meaning that the flowers are one of three different types: (1) short-styled, (2) medium-styled, or (3) long-styled. Seed will only be produced when one stylar form is pollinated by another stylar form; self-pollination will produce few or no seeds. Thus, Blasdale reports, *O. rubra* rarely sets seed in California (he did find short- and medium-styled forms in California but no long-styled forms).

In summary, the correct name for the common pink wood sorrel is *O. rubra*. An absolute, final answer would require examination of the type specimens of Saint-Hilaire (in Paris) and Urban (in Berlin). However, my questions to the *Magnolia* readers are the following. Has anyone noted the two growth forms (spreading versus clumping) of *O. rubra*? Is *O. rubra* 'Lilacina' still grown? Can I obtain plants of *O. rubra* 'Alba' from someone? Does your *O. rubra* set seed? Are *O. rosea* or *O. violacea* still in cultivation?

Elizabeth Lawrence also lists *O. braziliensis* in *The Little Bulbs* (1957) as hardy in North Carolina and flowering a cyclamen purple. She notes that in South Carolina this is known as the Georgetown oxalis, and she found it "growing so freely



in Mr. McNairy's garden in Laurinburg, North Carolina...." Has anyone found this species in old gardens in the south? How

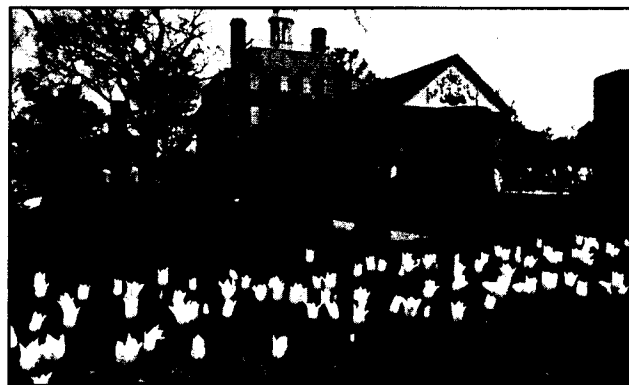
did it acquire the epithet "Georgetown oxalis?" Lawrence also mentions the rhodamine purple *O. lasiandra*: "This seems to be a common garden flower in the Deep South for I often see it advertised by farm women in the Mississippi Farm Bulletin...." Does anyone still cultivate this bulbous species? What is the range of cultivation? L. H. Bailey in *The Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture* (1943) says that *O. lasiandra* "Under the variously used name 'floribunda' said to occur in the color varieties álba, caeruléscent and lilácina." The yellow Bermuda buttercup, *O. pes-caprae* (*O. cernua*), is noted as naturalized in Bermuda and Florida. How common is this species in old southern gardens? L. H. Bailey (1943) also reports of *O. cernua* "A form with double fls. is var. *plêna*." Are there any other desirable species in old gardens?

Do your gardening neighbors call these oxalis or wood sorrels? And, finally, how do you pronounce Oxalis? Do you talk about your ox-a-lis' or your ox-al'-is? +

Call For Papers

In October, 1995 the tenth conference on Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscape will be held once again at Old Salem, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The Landscape Conference Committee is currently soliciting suggestions and proposals for lectures, workshops, and panel discussions pertinent to the theme, "The Influence of Women On The Southern Landscape."

Suggestions and proposals should be submitted to the Landscape Conference, Old Salem, Inc., Box F-Salem Station, Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27108 +



The twelfth-annual meeting of SGHS will convene May 6th in Colonial Williamsburg. The gardens at the Governor's Palace will be a gathering place for SGHS members. Photo courtesy of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Virginia.

Restoration of Anne Spencer Garden Recognized

The January/February issue of *Historic Preservation* features an article on twentieth-century poet Anne Spencer and the garden she nurtured for more than seventy years at her home in Lynchburg, Virginia. Spencer, a well-known figure of the Harlem Renaissance, created an intellectual oasis for African-American scholars and artists travelling in the South. Guests at her modest, wine-red shingle house at 1313 Pierce Street included James Weldon Hughes, Paul Robeson, Langston Hughes, Thurgood Marshall, and Marian Anderson among others. Her garden in full bloom was the object of many visits by friends such as writer W.E.B. DuBois who presented her with a cast-iron African head which she and her husband Edward placed by the garden pond.

Although the house was listed in the National



Register of Historic Places for 1977 (after her death in 1975) it was not until 1983 that work to restore the garden began with the efforts of Jane Baber White. By then, time and neglect had taken their toll, leaving

White a challenging task which has become for her a labor of love. Her efforts to coordinate volunteers, solicit support from the Hillside Garden Club and other groups, and her exhaustive research into the writings and life of Anne Spencer has resulted in the re-creation of a garden which reflects the heart and spirit of its creator. Restored to its 1925 appearance, the garden contains thirty-five surviving roses planted by the Spencers, including a 1902 American Pillar and a 1927 Spanish Beauty, as well as the original anemones, lilies, and Chionodoxa which had been buried beneath a jungle of privet and honeysuckle.

Jane White, a member of the Southern Garden History Society, spoke about the restoration of this garden in the sharing session of the 1991 *Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes* conference at Old Salem +

In Print

The Well-placed Weed the Bountiful Garden of Ryan Gainey. In this beautifully illustrated book, designed by Charles L. Ross with photographs by David Schilling, SGHS member Ryan Gainey shares the joy of his private garden and shows how to weave the garden into your life and home. The book, published in conjunction with a seven-part series by Atlanta Public Television entitled "The Well-Placed Weed," is both a whimsical and romantic study of Ralph Waldo Emerson's notion that a weed is "a plant no one has found a use for." Available through Taylor Publishing of Dallas, Texas. The 1993 hardcover edition is \$29.95.

An expanded and updated fourth edition of ***Gardening by Mail*** is now available. Barbara J. Barton's popular and useful source book lists thousands of mail-order suppliers of seeds, plants, and garden accessories and service companies throughout the United States and Canada. This well-indexed resource also includes information

on horticultural societies, research libraries, magazines, newsletters, and books. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company, New York. \$19.95.

This season's ode to roses comes from Sean McCann, author of ***The Rose: An Encyclopedia of North American Roses, Rosarians, and Rose Lore***. McCann traces its history in the New World from the wild roses cultivated by Native Americans along the James River Valley to the All-American Rose Selections developed by modern breeders. A Stackpole Books publication. \$24.95.

The New Small Garden: Plans and Plants That Make Every Inch Count by SGHS member and garden expert Peter Loewer supplies the reader with every detail needed to design a garden in a small area. Guidelines are given for choosing the best plants for a host of gardens, including dwarf conifer gardens, alpine gardens for rock plants, moss gardens for shade, and trough, tub and pot gardens. \$19.95 +

Calendar

Continued from page 2 . . .

sale to benefit Capital Area Preservation, Inc. Herbs, hard-to-find perennials, old garden roses, scented geraniums, herb products, garden accessories and books will be available. A free workshop on "New and Unusual Herbs" will be held Saturday morning at 9 a.m. For more information, call (919) 834-4844.

April 30th, 1994. "Heritage Plants in Today's Gardens," a conference sponsored by the Frederick W. Vanderbilt Garden Association, Inc., will be held in Hyde Park, New York. Topics will include old garden roses, Victorian gardens, and SGHS member Tovah Martin will speak on "The Victorian Parlor Garden." For more information, call (914) 889-4813.

May 6th-8th, 1994. "In Search of the Colonial Landscape." The Twelfth-Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society sponsored by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Sessions will be held in the Cascades Meeting Center. The program includes trips to Bacon's Castle and Carter's Grove and lectures by Rollin Woolley, Gordon Chappell, M. Kent Brinkley, Terry Yemm, and Wesley Greene of the Colonial Williamsburg staff along with Ann Crossman and Thaisa Way. Speakers will address the complex issues of garden restoration from the Colonial Revival Period to the present-day focus on landscape archaeology and infrared photography using this renowned historic site as a case study. Program brochures and registration forms have been mailed to all current SGHS members. For additional information, contact meeting chair Lawrence Henry at (804) 220-7451 or meeting registrar Deb Chapman at (804) 220-7255.



May 16th-27th, 1994. "Private Gardens of England and the Royal Chelsea Flower Show," a travel study program offered by the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Frank Robinson, executive director of the botanical garden, will be guest horticulturist for this tour of fifteen English gardens from "The Priory" near Tewkesbury to Sissinghurst Castle and ending with a day at the Chelsea Flower Show and the Tradescant Gardens. For reservation information, call (800) 942-6666.

May 19th-22nd, 1994. The annual meeting and conference of the Heritage Rose Foundation will be held in Richmond, Virginia. The meeting will include planting projects with heritage roses at the Virginia House and a rose identification workshop. Tours of local gardens and the Hollywood Cemetery are also planned. For more information, contact Charles A. Walker, Jr. at (919) 834-2591 or send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to 1512 Gorman Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27606.

May 21st, 1994. The Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants will host an Open House at Tufton Farm, the Center's nursery and production facility, from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. This is a special opportunity to enjoy the "behind-the-scenes" operation of this preservation program at Monticello near Charlottesville, Virginia. SGHS member Dr. Arthur Tucker, historic plant expert from Dover State College in Delaware [see page 5], will be on hand to discuss historic roses, dianthus, and other spring-blooming perennials. For more information, contact Peggy Newcomb at (804) 984-9816 +

Musk Rose

continued from page 4

a large part of the research that proved the kinship of the Burwell and Crenshaw families through their descent from Governor Spotswood of Virginia.

The various rosarians involved in the rediscovery of *R. moschata* in America have made sure that the true autumn-blooming 'Musk Rose' of history is now back in commerce so that it will be widely grown again and safe from future loss. Ruth Knopf has found one other, apparently unconnected, plant of *R. moschata*, but there is a great deal of interest in pursuing the possibility that the study of the Crenshaw/Burwell family's movements will lead to even more findings of original 'Musk Rose' plants. This is an ideal example of the way that treasured possessions such as roses were shared as family and friends spread out and settled a new country.

Searching for and finding old roses, whether



done alone or with a group of experienced and delightful "plant thieves" such as the famous Texas Rose Rustlers, is like taking part in a treasure hunt with a time limit.

Parking lots and building projects are being set down on top of more and more old garden sites. Breeders of modern roses are coming to recognize the vigor and beauty of older kinds, but rose breeding is a long, slow business and every old rose that gets bulldozed is not only a loss to gardens now but a loss to the gene pool for the roses of the future. On a personal level, simply by growing a rose variety and keeping it from extinction makes a contribution to the conservation of existing beauty, and, unlike whale-saving, you get to enjoy your noble work in the intimacy of your own garden. It's even possible that the foundling rose rescued from the teeth of the backhoe or collected from a cemetery on the verge of "perpetual care" will turn out to be an identifiable and historically important variety, such as the ancient 'Musk Rose' +

Members in the News

The Southern Garden History Society has recently made the news thanks to SGHS member **Davyd Foard Hood**. His article for Richmond's 1994 Antiques Show Magazine, "A Renaissance in Gardening and Garden History," recognizes the contributions of this organization and is illustrated with the cover of a recent issue of *Magnolia*.

"The Southern Gardener" section in the March-April issue of ***Southern Accents*** contains a piece by SGHS member **Linda C. Askey**. Entitled "Garden History is Alive and Growing," her story features the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants at Monticello.

Landscape historian **C. Allan Brown** will be a keynote speaker for the "Garden Show of Paris and Western France," to be held at Thoiry, a sixteenth-century French renaissance chateau in the countryside west of Paris. The event, a major trade and public horticultural show, will be held April 15th-17th, 1994.

Garden designer **Sarah S. (Sally) Boesberg** has been named Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Horticultural Society. Ms. Boesberg, who teaches courses on the history of landscape and garden design at George Washington University, has been a member of the AHS Board and its executive committee since 1990 +

Of Interest



Ramble On: The Antique Rose Emporium

Branches Out. On February 26th a sport of the original Emporium in Independence, Texas opened in Dahlonega, Georgia, expanding this rose-rustling enterprise further across the South. Dahlonega was once famous as America's first mining site during the 1828 Gold Rush. This historic community, located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains and on the banks of the "wildly scenic" Chestatee River, is one hour north of, and ten degrees cooler than, Atlanta. Manager Glenn Austin, and his associate Henry Flowers, moved from Independence (once called the "Athens of the South") to develop this site which includes extensive display gardens, a sales area,

and gift shop. The mail-order operation will remain exclusively in Texas. For more information about this exciting venture, write the Emporium at Rt. 1 Box 630,

Dahlonega, Georgia 30533, or call (706) 864-5884. Information from their toll-free line in Brenham, Texas is also available by calling 1-800-441-0002.

The Gardens of Summer. A special, ten-day tour of English gardens, sponsored by Old Salem Inc., will take place this summer from June 30th to July 9th. The tour begins and ends in London and includes trips to Kensington Gardens, Motisfont Abbey, Sudeley Castle, and Hidcote Manor. A highlight of the trip will be the Hampton Court International Flower Show and Rose Festival. For more details, contact Anne Cox, (919) 721-7333 or Lord Addison Travel at 800-326-0170 ♦

Deadline for submission of articles for the Summer Issue of Magnolia is May 1st.

Florence P. Griffin, *President*

Ben G. Page, Jr., *Vice-President*

Flora Ann Bynum, *Secretary-Treasurer*

William Lanier Hunt, *Honorary President*

Magnolia grandiflora reproduced by courtesy of Rare Book Division, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library.

Editor:

Peggy C. Newcomb

Monticello, P.O.B. 316

Charlottesville, VA 22902

(804) 984-9816

Fax (804) 977-6140

Associate Editor:

Kenneth M. McFarland

Stagville Center, P.O.B. 71217

Durham, NC 27722-1217

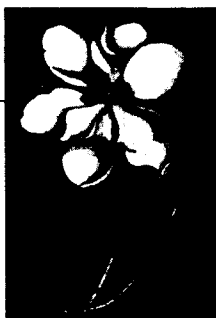
(919) 620-0120

Fax (919) 620-0422

Southern Garden History Society
Old Salem, Inc.
Drawer F, Salem Station
Winston-Salem, NC 27108

FIRST CLASS
US POSTAGE
PAID
Charlottesville, VA
Permit No. 345





Magnolia

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

Bulletin of the
Southern Garden
History Society

Vol. X

No.4

Summer 1994

"In Search of the Colonial Landscape" — Williamsburg Style

Certainly, the theme chosen for the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society belongs to the members of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation who are intimately involved with its restoration. For the better part of this century,



The Orlando Jones garden in Colonial Williamsburg. Photo courtesy of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Colonial Williamsburg has done more than any other restoration to shape and direct our notion of the early American landscape. Equally important is our effort, as a society of southern garden history, to participate in this quest. And yet, as trends, technologies, and current thinking evolve, our grasp of the true "Colonial Landscape" becomes more elusive. We learn that the Williamsburg of today is not the same Williamsburg of ten or twenty or fifty years ago. But, is it closer to that Williamsburg of the

eighteenth century? As director of museums at Colonial Williamsburg and conference chair Lawrence Henry pondered in his opening remarks, history itself is no longer a refuge from change.

By adopting a multifaceted approach, Colonial Williamsburg's talented staff of researchers and landscape professionals set about to

Continued on page 2 . . .

Inside this Issue

Page 3	<i>Colonial Gardens: A Williamsburg Perspective</i>
Page 7	<i>Rose Rustlers Strike Williamsburg</i>
Page 9	<i>Alliance for Historic Preservation</i>
Page 10	<i>Heritage Rose Enthusiasts Gather in Richmond</i>

Calendar

October 7th-8th, 1994. The annual Southern Garden Symposium will be held in St. Francisville, Louisiana at Grace Church's Jackson Hall, Afton Villa, Oakley, and Hemingbough. Speakers include SGHS members Felder Rushing from Mississippi, Mt. Vernon's horticulturist Dean Norton and internally renown Pamela Harper. Call (318) 635-3349.

October 21-22nd, 1994. Fall Gardening Symposium at Winedale. Contact Gloria Jaster, University of Texas Winedale Historical Center, P.O. Box 11, Round Top, TX 78954. Or call



(409) 278-3530, FAX (409) 278-3531.

April 21st-23rd, 1995. The thirteenth annual meeting of the Southern Garden History Society. Under the direction of former SGHS president, Dr. Edgar Givhan,

this meeting will examine historic gardens in the Mobile, Alabama area. Look for more information in upcoming issues of *Magnolia*.

October 5th-7th, 1995. The tenth biennial conference on "Restoring Southern Gardens and Landscapes," held at Old Salem in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. This year's conference theme will be "The Influence of Women on the Southern Landscape."

In Search of . . . *Continued from page 1*

demonstrate the underlying seriousness of their approach to this extremely complex issue. Their current treatment of the eighteenth-century landscape, which now presents a fuller view of the enslaved African Americans who dominated it, was experienced most convincingly at Carter's Grove. In the absence of twentieth-century intrusions — namely automobiles — first-person interpretation is immediately enhanced and expanded. There, for example, the juxtaposition of the private slave plot vs. the slave-tended

plantation kitchen garden can be seen, although the latter was not fully interpreted during our visit. Nonetheless, the entire atmosphere of Carter's Grove, especially at dusk, transcends the present, offering even the most critical a moment suspended in time.

On the other hand, Colonial Williamsburg has also embraced the once maligned label of "Colonial Revival" as its own. And, why not? No one can doubt the importance of these gardens so masterly designed by two giants in early twentieth-century landscape architecture, Arthur A. Shurcliff and Alden Hopkins. Their work has formed the enduring "Williamsburg Image" which will not soon vanish from our consciousness, nor should it. Now beyond the half-century mark, many of these gardens have aged with remarkable elegance despite the use and abuse of millions of visitors. By using these gardens as an opportunity for interpretation, Colonial Williamsburg becomes the epitome of a distinctly American early twentieth-century mind set that goes beyond style and design.

Reflected within the ranks of Colonial Williamsburg's professional staff lies another important recent trend in the workings of garden restoration: the emergence of educated and articulate professionals who also work as gardeners. In the case of Colonial Williamsburg, some even work as costumed interpreters or occasional garden guides within the historic district. Their insightful abilities create a new order in historic garden restoration. This trend was no

Continued on page 9 . . .



Kent Brinkley (left), landscape architect at Colonial Williamsburg, with Bill and Florence Griffin. Photo by Ken McFarland.

Colonial Gardens: A Williamsburg Perspective

by Gordon W. Chappell, Director, Landscape and
Facilities Services, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

*[This paper was presented at the SGHS annual
meeting.]*

During much of the eighteenth-century, Williamsburg was the capital of the largest, wealthiest and most populous American colony, and the center of political and cultural life in Virginia. Due to its thoughtful city plan, Williamsburg did not grow in the same formless,



The Elkanah Deane Garden has been simplified from Shurcliff's 1930s design to accommodate current thought and increasing shade. All photos in this story courtesy of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

hodge-podge manner of the original colonial capital, Jamestown. Williamsburg was laid out around an axial, orderly grouping of public



buildings, each relating to the other in a grand scheme. Characterized by its broad, straight streets and its massive public buildings, the new capital had distinctly urban qualities. Its baroque-style vistas

pulled the public buildings into the landscape and the useful, public open-spaces reflected current European city planning trends. The gridiron town plan, conceived by Governor Francis Nicholson between 1699-1704, established large public greens, neighborhoods on the edge of town, and allotted at least a half acre of land to each town lot. Today, Nicholson's early eighteenth-century town plan is largely still intact.

During the first quarter of the eighteenth-century, the English were abandoning the formality of the Anglo-Dutch garden style and a trend toward naturalistic gardens was emerging.

A style featuring "natural" landscapes of sweeping lawns, clumps of trees, artificially-created lakes, diverted streams and manmade hills. While some of these features were contrived, they simulated the natural. The heyday of clipped hedges, ornate flower beds and straight lines in landscape design was quickly waning.

The trend toward a more natural landscape did not appeal to the settlers in Virginia, as reminders of the natural were all around them. To them, a garden was nature tamed, trimmed and enclosed within a fence or hedge. It was a demonstration of their ability to control nature and impose reason upon it. Also, nostalgia may have been at work. The colonists tended to create the gardens they remembered in England during the reign of William and Mary. Consequently this garden style persisted longer in America, where it had been adopted, than in England where it had evolved.

The real greening of Williamsburg began when Governor Alexander Spotswood arrived in the Virginia colony in 1710. Spotswood embarked on a path that would ultimately compromise his relationship with the House of Burgesses. Quickly, and with great expense, he began the process of crafting a sophisticated garden at the Governor's Palace, arguably for his own pleasure and sustenance. For

Spotswood, gardens were synonymous with civilized and elegant living, and his garden designs were traditionally formal, geometric and well balanced. For elegance and extravagance,

nothing in the colony exceeded the Governor's gardens.

While few of Williamsburg's public buildings survived into the twentieth century, many homes and shops did, and have remained in use. Dr. William A. R. Goodwin, the rector of Bruton Parish church, was deeply interested in the city's past and, in 1926, fired the enthusiasm of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. who agreed to finance Dr. Goodwin's vision of returning Williamsburg to its eighteenth-century appearance.

From the beginning, Williamsburg's restorers appreciated the importance of reconstructing the gardens and greens, as well as the houses and shops. However, there was little physical evidence remaining of eighteenth-century gardens. Here and there were surviving bits of holly and boxwood hedges suggesting the evergreen framework of garden layouts. It was obvious that considerable research would be necessary to restore and recreate the landscapes of the colonial town. Information was gleaned from private and public collections of documents and garden books both in America and abroad. University and private research libraries were a source of much



valuable information. Archaeological excavations were conducted throughout the town for the purpose of locating house and outbuilding foundations, walls, walks, fences, and other garden features. In some cases, simple walkways were uncovered just beneath the surface that suggested the greater garden layout, including the garden's axis, and the probable size, shape, and alignment of garden planting beds.

Additional information about the arrangement of gardens and outbuildings was revealed through research into old tax records and insurance policies, which frequently included sketches of the layout of the lots. Descriptions of the city were occasionally mentioned in the travel accounts, letters, or journals of early visitors. Plant explorers and naturalists often kept detailed accounts of plants found growing in the area.

A number of eighteenth-century maps have been discovered that have also verified the layout and growth of the town. The most useful tool has been the so-called "Frenchman's Map," that was drawn by a French officer in 1782 after the victory at Yorktown for the purpose of billeting troops.

Beyond accurately showing streets and buildings, this document provides detailed information about fence lines and even suggests trees at some locations.

Important during the early days of the restoration was the work of the Foundation's first landscape architect, Arthur A. Shurcliff, a pivotal figure in the development of the discipline of landscape architecture in America. A resident of Boston, Shurcliff studied under Charles Elliot and Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and had laid out the plans for Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. Shurcliff was an internationally known landscape architect and uniquely qualified to play an important role in



Giant Crested Cockscomb (Celosia cristata) in Deane Garden.

the restoration of Williamsburg and its gardens.

Shurcliff wrote that the re-created gardens were intended to "recall the period of the ancient dwellings and the old city itself." He further noted that local landscape traditions differed from those of other regions, as did the plants. In his research into colonial garden design, Shurcliff realized the value of the Claude

Joseph Sauthier's maps of North Carolina colonial towns and their gardens. Sauthier, a French landscape gardener noted that local landscape traditions differed from those of other regions, as did the plants. In his research into colonial garden design, Shurcliff realized the value of the Claude Joseph Sauthier's maps of North Carolina colonial towns and their gardens. Sauthier, a French landscape

gardener who came to North Carolina in 1767, joined Governor William Tryon and surveyed and drew detailed maps for several of that colony's towns. Sauthier's plans included extremely accurate renderings of intricate garden layouts. The style and pattern of gardens recorded in these drawings have been used in many parts of today's re-created Williamsburg gardens.

Shurcliff's research included a careful, thorough study of southern plantation homes and gardens, and of colonial Virginia places in particular. Shurcliff examined nearly one hundred different colonial sites that, combined with a few documented surviving original garden designs, served as the precedents for the newly-designed Williamsburg gardens.

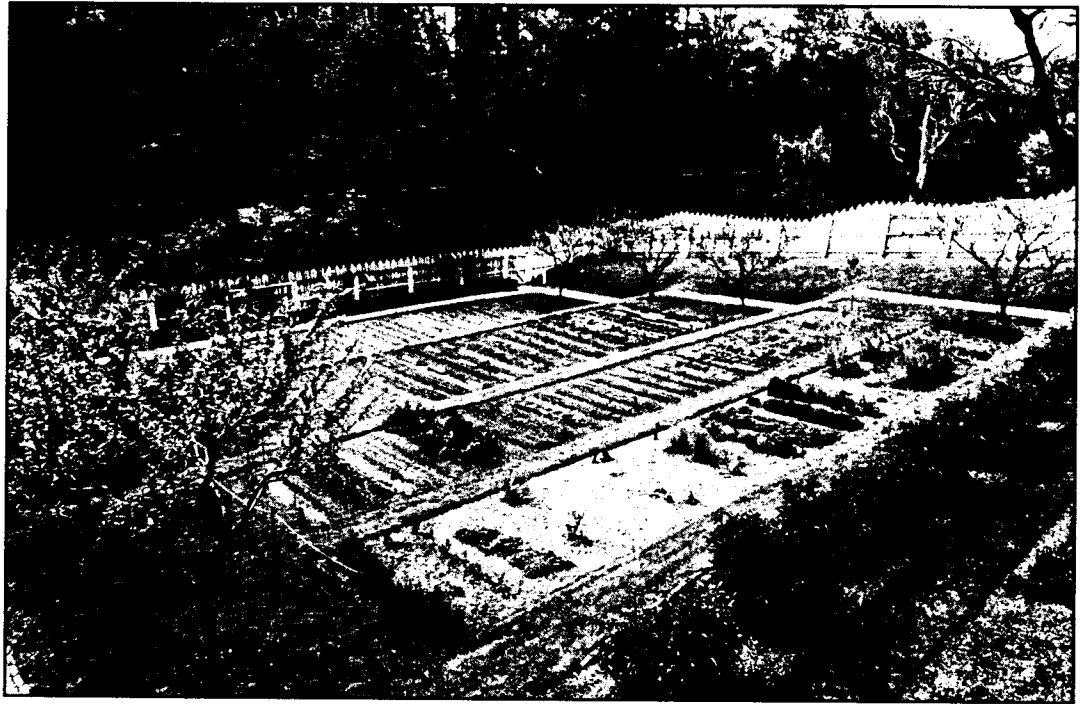
Research into the gardens of Williamsburg has been actively pursued since the earliest days and continues today. The research techniques of archaeologists, in particular, have changed dramatically. Newly rediscovered bits of information continue to surface, often resulting in



the reinterpretation of features of the town and its gardens.

When the restoration began, Williamsburg was primarily an architectural and curatorial restoration that emphasized "high style" in decorative arts and garden design.

There has been criticism that Williamsburg appears too neat and clean, too manicured. Today, because of ongoing research, more



The terraced Kitchen Gardens in the Governor's Palace.

emphasis is placed on "living history," to try to show how the colonists lived and worked as a community. Williamsburg today is much more than a shrine to the pretty things of the past. Colonial Williamsburg is a compromise between historical authenticity and common sense, between blunt realism and gentle nostalgia, between being a moment in time in the eighteenth-century and a moment in time in the twentieth-century. In recent years, our historians and curators have allowed the town to exhibit a more realistic appearance. Not every fence is painted every year. The Palace Green is no longer mowed like a golf course fairway, since in the eighteenth-century grazing sheep or cattle were allowed to roam freely and would keep the grass close-cropped.

Today, there are about a hundred gardens in the Historic Area that range in size from a tiny vegetable plot to the ten acres comprising the Governor's Palace gardens. These gardens reflect the legacy of the early plantsman and today we

are obligated to nurture these colonial revival gardens we have inherited from our predecessors. These colonial revival gardens have become historical artifacts in their own right and they deserve our greatest care and respect. This period of colonial revivalism is now recognized as an important chapter in the preservation and garden history of America.

These gardens, designed by landscape architects Arthur Shurcliff, Alden Hopkins, Don Parker, and their successors at Colonial Williamsburg today, have been enormously influential on American garden design. There can be no doubt that they re-create the spirit and character of the finest eighteenth-century colonial America gardens.

Today we face a re-evaluation of many of these gardens: re-evaluations based on new research findings and techniques, and of course,



budgetary considerations. If we were designing these gardens today, we might decide to present them with greater simplicity than our predecessors. But these gardens are not only decorative, many are more than sixty-five years old.

Our educational mission suggests that we must go further in re-creating noteworthy examples of the early days. Where this is appropriate and documented, modifications may occur. In doing so, we can depict more realistically what current research says is authentically colonial, and what life may have been like for most colonial Virginians. As our lovely, evocative gardens grow older and more beautiful with the passage of time, their heritage and legacy become even more valuable and important ♦

SGHS Spring Board Meeting Report

by Flora Ann Bynum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

New officers for the Southern Garden History Society were elected at the annual meeting held in Colonial Williamsburg on May 6th. Serving for a two-year term will be Benjamin G. (Ben) Page, Jr. of Nashville, Tennessee as president; Dr. William C. (Bill) Welch of College Station, Texas as vice-president; and Mrs. Zachary T. (Flora Ann) Bynum, Jr. of Winston-Salem, North Carolina continuing as secretary-treasurer. William Lanier (Bill) Hunt of Chapel Hill, North Carolina remains as honorary president. Three new board members were elected: Mrs. Cornelius C. (Betsy) Crusel, Jr. of New Orleans, Louisiana; Mrs. Robert H. (Louise) Gunn of Atlanta, Georgia; and Lawrence (Larry) Henry of Williamsburg, Virginia.

In accordance with new bylaws adopted by the society at its 1993 annual meeting in Texas, officers were elected by the board, and directors were elected by the society.

During the annual business meeting Dr. Welch praised outgoing president Mrs. William W. (Florence) Griffin of Atlanta, Georgia for major achievements during her term of office, including the revision of the bylaws and publication of the

first *Magnolia Essays*. Mrs. Griffin graciously received a standing ovation from society members and went on to conduct her final meeting as president with good humor and authority.

Highlights from the board of directors meeting included a report sent by Dr. Edgar G. Givhan, II of Montgomery, Alabama on the 1995 annual meeting in Mobile, scheduled for April 21st - 23rd. M. Edward Shull reported on the spring 1996 annual meeting to be held on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. The board decided to look into the possibility of meetings in Florida and Asheville, North Carolina for 1997 and 1998.

Mrs. Griffin announced that Lucy Lawliss received an award of honor by the Georgia Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects for her authorship of *Magnolia Essays Number One*, "Residential Work of the Olmsted Firm in Georgia, 1893 - 1937." Copies of this publication are still available through the society and board members established a wholesale price for bulk orders from book dealers and other organizations.

The board discussed options for indexing

Magnolia in the near future as well as the possible publication of a journal of selected articles from past issues.

The rotation of board members went into effect following the Williamsburg meeting, as outlined by the new bylaws. Serving for a one-year term will be Mrs. Julian S. (Anne) Carr, Jr. of Atlanta, Georgia; Hugh G. Dargan of Atlanta, Georgia; Mrs. T. Graydon (Judith) Flowers, Jr. of Dublin, Mississippi; and Dr. Givhan. Serving for a



two-year term will be Mrs. Robert B. (Glenn) Haltom of Natchez, Mississippi; Peter J. Hatch of Charlottesville, Virginia; Catherine M. Howett of Athens, Georgia; and Ed Shull. Serving for a three-year term will be Mrs. John C. (Jane) Symmes of Madison, Georgia; Suzanne L. Turner of Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Dr. Welch; and Mrs. E. Dameron (Shingo) Manard of New Orleans, Louisiana. These members are all eligible for re-election to the board after one year ♣

Rose Rustlers Strike Williamsburg

by William C. Welch, College Station, Texas

An unscheduled stop for several SGHS members attending the annual meeting in Colonial Williamsburg included the Dora Armistead garden on Duke of Gloucester Street. According to the present owner, Judge Robert T. Armistead, the home was built in 1890 on the foundations of a 1715 home where, it is said, George Washington



The magnificent 'Cramoisi Superieur'. Photo by Peggy Newcomb.

once slept. Dora Armistead was a noted gardener in her day and her nephew a botanist. Today, this

late Victorian structure, one of only a handful remaining in the historic district, has lost much of its original splendor, but the remnants of the garden retained some true gems.

Several roses throughout the property were in full bloom; one of which I consider to be a major find. For years I have searched for the climbing form of 'Cramoisi Superieur', a robust dark red China Rose. The bush form is frequently found on old home sites, cemeteries, and similar locations throughout the South. Although I have seen references to the climbing form, it has always eluded me — until now.

Quite often old roses are found at abandoned sites in less than ideal condition. This magnificent specimen, however, had been carefully trained to shade the large front porch of the house. Judge Armistead adds that this rose is so vigorous, it sometimes climbs well on to the roof of the porch, although a freeze of several years ago has cut it back. He speculates that Dora Armistead planted the shrub in the 1890s.

My first reference to this rose was in an article published in the *San Antonio Express* (September 2, 1934) and the *Dallas Morning News* (December 16, 1934) by Adina de Zavala. Miss de Zavala was chair of the Texas Centennial Commission and was encouraging Texans to plant roses to celebrate the state's upcoming centennial celebration in 1836. Adina related her memories of conversations with her grandmother, Emily

West de Zavala, and visits to her garden which dated to the early 1830s. Emily began her garden shortly after her husband Lorenzo returned to Texas from a stint as ambassador to France. He had also served as vice president for the newly formed Republic of Texas. While in France, Lorenzo reported receiving gifts



This climbing China rose is one of the few truly red heirloom varieties. Photo by Peggy Newcomb.

of new China Roses to take back to his home in Texas.

Adina specifically mentioned the planting of a climbing form of 'Cramoisi Superieur' on one of the columns of the plantation house. Her recollections preceed the actual introduction of this rose. Greg Grant's files on red China roses include two climbing forms of 'Cramoisi Superieur': 'Rev. James Sprunt' by Sprunt in 1858 and Climbing 'Cramoisi Superieur' by the Coutourier nursery of France in 1885. (Reverend Sprunt was a Presbyterian clergyman of Kenansville, North Carolina.) Peter Henderson, well known author and plantsman of the period,



introduced the rose through his nursery.

Two early Texas nurseries also listed these roses: Gilbert Onderdonk's Mission Valley Nurseries in 1888 and William

Watson's Rosedale Nurseries of Brenham in 1899. These two forms may be the same, both being climbing sports of the well known shrub 'Cramoisi Superieur'. In his book *Shrub Roses of Today*, first published in 1962, Graham Stuart Thomas wrote, "The climbing form 'Cramoisi Superieur Grimpante' is a magnificent plant for a sunny wall." In his catalogue of 1912, Tom Smith noted that he had "seen the whole front of a two story house completely covered with the Climbing Cramoisi," whose flowers "... are continually produced all the season through."

My excitement for this rose goes beyond its unique beauty. There are few truly red heirloom roses and even fewer climbers. Because China Roses usually rebloom profusely, it could be a very useful plant for period or modern gardens. It was not difficult to infect SGHS members Steve Wheaton, Peggy Newcomb, and Peter Schaar with my enthusiasm for this rose. Rumor has it that a few carefully selected cuttings may have left Colonial Williamsburg in the luggage of these members. (Rumor also has it that a few snippings might have made it back to Texas.)

The Armistead garden contained several other interesting roses. A specimen valiantly struggling to survive against a shady side porch might be 'Jeanne D'Arc', a pure white Noisette introduced in 1848 and noted for its intense fragrance and handsome red hips. An early Tea Rose growing off the end of the front porch may be 'Duchesse de Brabant' (1857), a creamy pink rose and a favorite of Teddy Roosevelt who frequently wore it in his lapel. Judge Armistead adds that this Tea Rose may have been moved from an earlier siting on the property and planted here in the 1930s. A nice specimen of the Chestnut Rose (*Rosa roxburghii*) arched over the fence in the back yard, and bordering a wooded area was a type of lovely, rosy-pink Gallica.

We hope those few cuttings of our red China succeed so that, in time, the climbing 'Cramoisi Superieur' will again become available to rose enthusiasts. Meanwhile, I would appreciate any additional information on this beautiful rose that may help to document its past +

Middleton Place Hosts Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation

by Ian Firth, Athens, Georgia

T rue to its heterogeneous nature, the annual meeting of the Alliance was an occasion for people from different disciplines and professions to ponder, admire, and argue over historic landscapes. Meeting for the first time in this part of the South, the conference (held May 18th through the 22nd) focused on this region's heritage, but otherwise eschewed any unitary theme. Instead, a diversity of issues and viewpoints were explored.

The meeting opened with an eloquent plea by Catherine Howett for a creative approach to interpretation of historic landscapes, and a warning of the dangers of a proscriptive approach to treatments. This led to a lively discussion on the merits of the draft "Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Landscapes" prepared by the Preservation Assistance Division of the National Park Service. The variety and complexity of historic resources here in the South were illustrated in a series of presentations. Richard Porcher inventoried the remains of the coastal rice plantations, and Dale Jaegar led a visit to the abandoned Tea Farm rice fields which are being incorporated into a new county park. Jim Cothran summarized his research on the historic district of



the city. Richard Westmacott described African American gardening traditions in rural South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama, while Lucy Lawliss discussed the problems facing restoration efforts at the Martin

Luther King National Historic Site in the heart of Atlanta.

A similar diversity of interests and viewpoints was represented in our discussions. The concerns of trustees and administrators were outlined by Charles Duell at Middleton Place and George McDaniel at Drayton Hall. The satisfactions of archival discoveries were illustrated by Suzanne Turner with reference to her researches in Louisiana. The enthusiasm of stone conservators became apparent during visits to Charleston's cemeteries with Lynette Strangstad and Ken Shaw. Finally, the challenge of designing new gardens in eighteenth-century envelopes was the theme of the tour by Hugh and Mary Palmer Dargan.

Often, the most memorable aspects of an annual meeting are those unexpected moments which open up new or different ways of seeing — the unfamiliar landscape becomes familiar and vice versa. This meeting offered many such moments. In particular, John Rashford's anthropological study of gardens in Jamaica, South Carolina, and Japan allowed us to see gardens from an entirely new perspective. And then, there was the setting itself. Staying at the Middleton Inn allowed conference participants to spend time in an historic landscape beyond the normal operating hours — to hear the early morning stirrings of life on the Ashley River and contemplate Middleton's butterfly ponds by moonlight +

In Search of the Colonial Landscape *Continued from page 2*

more evident that in the list of speakers and guides selected for this conference from within the landscaping team. Their talks provided not only nuts-and-bolts information but also philosophical analysis of approach as in Wesley Greene's "Garden Maintenance: Managing Change Through Time." Likewise, Terry Yemm's paper on early Virginia plant explorers revealed a depth of research undoubtedly pursued beyond normal working hours.

Garden restoration has increasingly become a

multi-disciplinary exercise as Kent Brinkley discussed in his layman's look at landscape archaeology. Through the Colonial Williamsburg experience we understand what can be irrevocably lost in any pursuit of history. But, more importantly, the Williamsburg of today also shows us ways of better meeting the opportunities and challenges ahead in all aspects of the historic landscape movement. Ultimately, Colonial Williamsburg remains an enduring and vital force in that movement +

Heritage Rose Enthusiasts Gather in Richmond

by Davyd Foard Hood, Vale, North Carolina

Fifteen members of the Southern Garden History Society were among the fifty-six who convened in Richmond, Virginia on May 19th - 22nd for the eighth-annual meeting of the Heritage Rose Foundation. Old rose enthusiasts from New York, Florida, Texas, California, and



Stephen C. Scanniello of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and Charles A. Walker, Jr., president of the foundation, included a day of presentations, a day of visits to

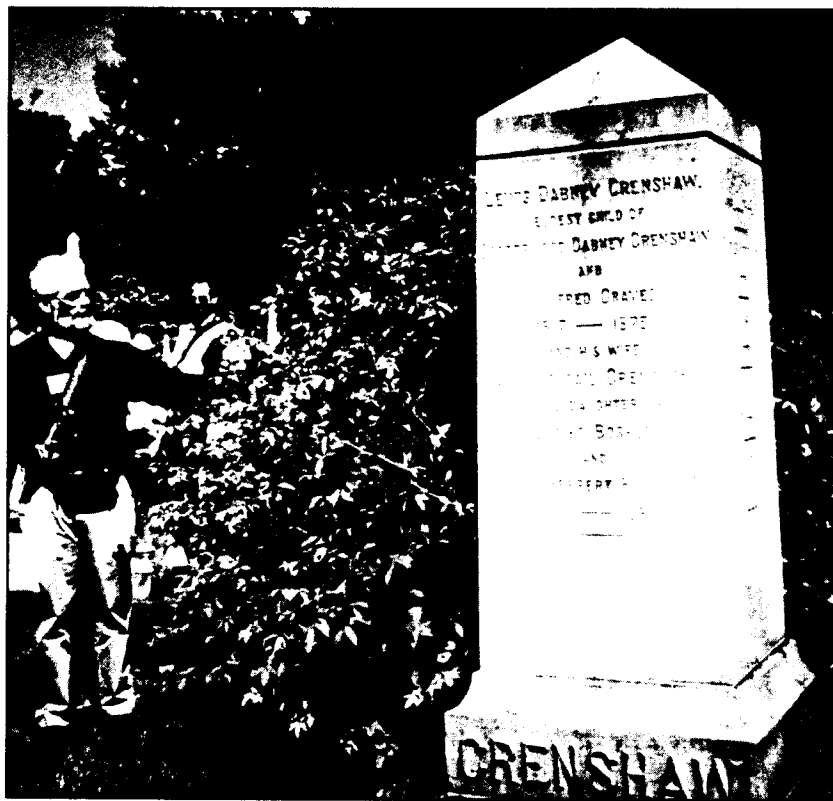
three public and private gardens in the city, and concluded with a Sunday trip to Fredericksburg.

Jane White of Lynchburg opened the conference with a discussion on the renovation of poet Anne Spencer's garden in Lynchburg. The historic houses and gardens in the care of the National Trust were the subject of a travelogue with commentary by Kelly K. Sinclair, director of the Center for Historic Houses at the Trust. After lunch, Mr. Walker addressed the ever-perplexing problem of identifying old roses, taking as his cue and topic "What the Old Rose Literature Can Tell Us." A

workshop followed during which Mr. Walker and his colleagues examined and identified roses brought to the conference from near and far.

On Saturday morning, the group gathered in Hollywood Cemetery, in the shadow of monuments marking the graves of presidents James Monroe and John Tyler. Hollywood Cemetery, designed by John Notman and laid out in 1848, is one of the earliest and most important garden cemeteries in the South which followed on the example of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. There, as is custom on foundation tours, roses were planted by members. In an organized, yet informal fashion, participants rambled through the cemetery identifying many old roses, planted over graves of the

dead in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, which continue to bloom season after



Charles A. Walker, Jr., president of the Heritage Rose Foundation, points out the musk rose on the Crenshaw plot in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, VA, during the annual meeting of the foundation May 21st. Photo by Flora Ann Bynum.

other points made up the small but energetic band. The weekend's schedule, arranged by

season.

Hollywood Cemetery is located on a bluff-like plateau overlooking the James River, and the river remained ever in view or thought for the remainder of the day. A box lunch was enjoyed in the gardens of Virginia House, the suburban estate of Ambassador Alexander Weddell in Windsor Farms. The house occupied a splendid site with commanding views to the James. Scott Burrell, estate manager, greeted the group and provided tours of the gardens and the country house which is maintained as a house museum by the Virginia Historical Society. Again, the traveling party followed custom and planted old roses in the garden designed for Alexander and Virginia Weddell by Charles Gillette.

Having traveled west from Hollywood Cemetery to Virginia House, the tour continued even further west, out River Road, and concluded at Redesdale, on the city's great exurban estates of the inter-war period. Charles and Anne Reed greeted the group on the steps of the handsome Georgian Revival mansion designed in 1925 by William Lawrence Bottomley for Mr. Reed's kinsman Leslie Hartwell Reed, a

prominent Richmond tobacconist. The spring gardens at Redesdale remained in their prime, in large part because of the unseasonably cool temperatures in April and early May. Tall delphiniums, lupines, poppies, and a host of blue, pink, and purple-hued flowers filled the



borders and beds of the garden adjoining the house and the walled garden to the west. The day ended with a buffet supper at the 2300 Club on Church Hill, a

nineteenth-century neighborhood which developed around St. John's Episcopal Church where Patrick Henry spoke his ever-famous words.

The annual meeting concluded on Sunday with a trip to Fredericksburg and a tour of Kenmore and its garden. Perhaps unintentionally, the sub-theme for this meeting might have been the work of Charles F. Gillette. Gillette (1886-1969), the first important landscape architect to develop a practice in early twentieth-century Richmond, was the designer of the original gardens at Virginia



Members of the Heritage Rose Foundation plant old roses in the burial plot of President James Monroe in the Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, VA, during the annual meeting of the Foundation in May. Photo courtesy of Flora Ann Bynum.

House and Redesdale. He also designed the twentieth-century setting of Kenmore whose Colonial Revival landscape was the first garden restoration project of the Garden Club of Virginia ♦

Members in the News

The May issue of *Mid-Atlantic Country* magazine features a lengthy article by Susan Tamulevich on the pioneering work of Mid-Atlantic sites in the historic landscape preservation movement. Entitled "New Science for Old Gardens," the story examines a number of historic gardens, notably Old Salem, Dumbarton Oaks, Monticello, Poplar Forest, Carter's Grove, the William Paca Garden, and Mount Vernon. Numerous SGHS members are quoted throughout the piece, including: **Flora Ann Bynum** of Old Salem, **Peter Hatch** of Monticello, **Dean Norton** of Mount Vernon, and **John Fitzpatrick** of the Garden Conservancy.



Karen M. Laski's "Heirlooms of a Revolutionary" takes an in-depth look at Monticello's **Center for Historic Plants** in the April issue of the American Horticultural

Society's publication *American Horticulturist*. The story includes a profile of **Peggy Newcomb**, director of the Center.

Garden journalist and SGHS member **Linda Askey** highlights two of our founding members in the May issue of *Southern Accents*. In-coming president **Ben Page** and his wife (and unofficial co-president) **Libby** are recognized for their contributions to the floral arrangements for the altar of Christ Church in Nashville, Tennessee. This magnificent Episcopal church received an architectural award from the Metropolitan Historical Commission for its recent restoration +

Deadline for submission of articles for the Fall Issue of Magnolia is August 1st, 1994.

Florence P. Griffin, *President*
Ben G. Page, Jr., *Vice-President*
Flora Ann Bynum, *Secretary-Treasurer*
William Lanier Hunt, *Honorary President*

Magnolia grandiflora reproduced by courtesy of Rare Book Division, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library.

Editor:
Peggy C. Newcomb
Monticello, P.O.B. 316
Charlottesville, VA 22902
(804) 984-9816
Fax (804) 977-6140

Associate Editor:
Kenneth M. McFarland
Stagville Center, P.O.B. 71217
Durham, NC 27722-1217
(919) 620-0120
Fax (919) 620-0422

Southern Garden History Society
Old Salem, Inc.
Drawer F, Salem Station
Winston-Salem, NC 27108

FIRST CLASS
US POSTAGE
PAID
Charlottesville, VA
Permit No. 345

