



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

Magnolia

Publication of the Southern Garden
History Society

Vol. XXXI I

No. 4

Winter-Spring 2020

Blount Mansion: An Urban Oasis in Knoxville

By David Hearnese and Michael Jordan, Blount Mansion Assoc.

Tucked into a tree-shaded corner of downtown Knoxville, Tennessee, a National Historic Landmark property and its historic garden comprise an urban oasis amidst glass towers and concrete freeways. As one of the city's few remaining antebellum structures, Blount Mansion serves as a reminder of the time when Tennessee was just gaining statehood and Knoxville was on the outer edge of a rapidly expanding young nation. The gardens at Blount Mansion represent an eighty-five-year-old partnership formed in 1934 between the Blount Mansion Association (BMA) and the Knoxville Garden Club (KGC), both of which were formed in the early 1920s.

William Blount, born in Bertie County, North Carolina in 1749, descended from a family of prominent entrepreneurs and landowners. He served as a paymaster and quartermaster of North Carolina troops during the American Revolution, and afterwards represented the new state in the Continental Congress. In 1787, Blount was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. He signed the U.S. Constitution for North Carolina and campaigned for the ratification of the document in his home state. In 1790, President George Washington appointed Blount the first and only governor of the Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio—commonly known as the Southwest Territory—a restive frontier expanse, which Blount subsequently shepherded into admission to the Union as the state of Tennessee in 1796.

Blount came to the area originally known as White's Fort in 1791, christening it "Knoxville" in honor of Secretary of War Henry Knox, and designating it the territorial capital. Here, Blount built a house on the corner of Hill Avenue and State Street. The frame and clapboard dwelling served as Blount's home until his untimely passing at the age of fifty in 1800. Blount's family retained possession of the property until 1818. The house changed hands many times over the next 107 years, until the



Photo by Vaiden Taylor.

Blount Mansion Garden, present-day view looking Northeast.

threat of demolition in 1925 to make way for a parking lot brought Mary Boyce Temple and the Bonny Kate Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to the rescue. The Blount Mansion Association was formed to preserve the house as a museum for future generations, and the house was officially opened as a museum the next year.

From the time the museum opened, the BMA wanted both to preserve the house and improve the landscape, but the fledgling organization's budget difficulties forced it to

(continued on page 3)

Inside this Issue

- Pg. 6 *Mount Vernon's Witness Trees*
- Pg. 7 *Three Book Reviews*
- Pg. 12 *Mount Vernon Library Map Collection*
- Pg. 13 *In Print*
- Pg. 14 *GCV Centennial Tree Planting*
- Pg. 15 *Margie Jenkins Dies*



CALENDAR

April 2-4, 2020. “Natchitoches in the Red River Valley: Confluence of Cultures,” The 42nd annual meeting of the Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation will take place in Natchitoches, the oldest permanent settlement in the Louisiana Purchase. The three-day conference begins with an introduction to the El Camino Real de los Tejas and site of Los Adaes, the former capitol of Spanish Texas. The meeting includes tours of St. Augustine Church, Cane River Creole National Historical Park, plus Magnolia, Melrose, Oakland, and Cherokee Plantations, and ends with a banquet at the Cane River Brewery. Visit: <http://ahlp.org/annual-meetings/annual-meeting-2020/>

April 4, 2020. Annual Garden Gala Plant Sale, hosted by the Stephen F. Austin State University’s SFA Garden at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center in historic Nacogdoches, Texas. The event benefits the SFA Mast Arboretum, PNPC, Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden and Gayla Mize Garden, along with educational programs at SFA Gardens. Visit: sfagardens.org or call (936)468-4129.

April 17-19, 2020. “Celebrate Planet Earth: Giving Back with our Gardens,” the 74th annual Colonial Williamsburg garden conference, in honor of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. The keynote speaker, Joe Lamp’l, is a national gardening television host of *Growing a Greener World*. Additional speakers include Dr. Jeff Gillman on organic gardening; David Mizejewski, spokesperson for the National Wildlife Association; and authors Anne Spafford and Nancy Lawson. Visit: <https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/learn/conferences/garden-symposium>

April 18-25, 2020. Historic Garden Week in Virginia organized by the Garden Club of Virginia. Described as “America’s largest Open House,” this eight-day statewide event provides visitors a unique opportunity to see unforgettable gardens at the peak of Virginia’s springtime color, as well as beautiful houses and over 2,300 flower arrangements by Garden Club of Virginia members. Visit: www.vagardenweek.org.

April 24-26, 2020. 38th Annual Meeting of the Southern Garden History Society, at George Washington’s Mount Vernon. See details on

following page. Visit www.southerngardenhistory.org/events/annual-meeting for registration details and updates. Rooms have been set aside at the Holiday Inn & Suites at 625 First Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Be sure to make reservations by **April 2** at the Holiday Inn group rate booking link or by calling (703) 548-6300.

May 1-2, 2020. Georgia SGHS State Ambassadors’ Gathering in Historic Rosewell. SGHS members are invited to a Friday evening wine and cheese event prior to the Garden Club of Georgia program on Saturday, “Mansions in a Mill Town,” which will include tours of antebellum homes and gardens in Rosewell, Georgia. Visit: <http://gardenclub.uga.edu/historic.html#bhgp>

May 14-September, 2020. “A Landscape Saved: The Garden Club of Virginia at 100,” an exhibition at the Virginia Museum of History & Culture, in Richmond, VA. To commemorate GCV’s centenary, this exhibit tells the colorful, courageous, and impressive history of three generations of activists who have produced a strong statewide voice for conservation, gardening, and education. Visit: virginiahistory.org/exhibitions/

May 30, 2020 - Mississippi State Ambassadors’ Gathering at the Eudora Welty House & Garden in Jackson, MS. From 1:00-3:30 pm SGHS members are invited to learn about photographing your garden, with tips from Garden Club of America award-winning photographers. Welty’s own garden photography will also be discussed, tours of the Welty House will be given, and Susan Haltom and Cecile Wardlaw will lead members around the Welty garden. Call (601) 353-7762 if you plan to attend.

June 14-19, 2020. 24th Annual Historic Landscape Institute: “Preserving Jefferson’s Gardens and Landscapes.” This one-week course uses Monticello’s gardens and landscapes and the University of Virginia as outdoor classrooms to study historic landscape preservation. Lectures, workshops, field trips, and practical working experiences introduce students to the fields of landscape history, garden restoration, and historical horticulture. Visit: www.monticello.org/hli

Blount Mansion: An Urban Oasis.....(continued from page 1)

focus on the structure and make only minor alterations to the surrounding grounds. In 1934, the KGC bridged the gap by making an offer to install and maintain a proper garden at the young museum.

The KGC dates to 1923, when Mrs. John S. Brown and her garden-loving friends organized the club. They were admitted to the Garden Club of America in 1932 and took on the management of Blount Mansion's gardens a scant two years later.¹ However, due to the privations of the Great Depression, followed immediately by World War II, their plans for the museum did not fully flower until 1947, when William Pitkin's 1941 designs for the landscape were implemented.² Pitkin's plan, which represented the first formal landscape design for Blount Mansion, included an herb garden and a sunken garden area as well as herringbone brick paths, a bell, and a rustic well. Descendants of Charles McClung, the surveyor Blount appointed to lay out Knoxville's first streets, donated a sundial for the new garden.³

A new era arrived for Blount Mansion and its gardens in 1958 following the reconstruction of the kitchen as a stand-alone building in its original location, which disrupted Pitkin's design, as well as the restoration of Governor Blount's office, which had served as the museum caretaker's quarters until that time. At this pivotal moment, BMA, led by Mrs. Hugh van Deventer, and the KGC retained the services of Alden Hopkins, the highly regarded landscape architect on staff at Colonial Williamsburg. Hopkins was well known for his Colonial Revival-style designs, including the Pavilion Gardens at the University of Virginia and the gardens at Gunston Hall, home of founding father George Mason.⁴ Mrs. van Deventer and the two Knoxville organizations tasked Hopkins with designing an "authentic" eighteenth-century garden for Blount Mansion.⁵

In his redesign of the gardens in Knoxville, Hopkins retained some elements of Pitkin's original plan, yet

significantly altered the landscape in the rear of the mansion. Hopkins placed great emphasis on simplifying the layout of the grounds, explaining, "[a] great necessity in this garden as it now exists is for simplification of spaces and of small plant materials to reduce labor and time in

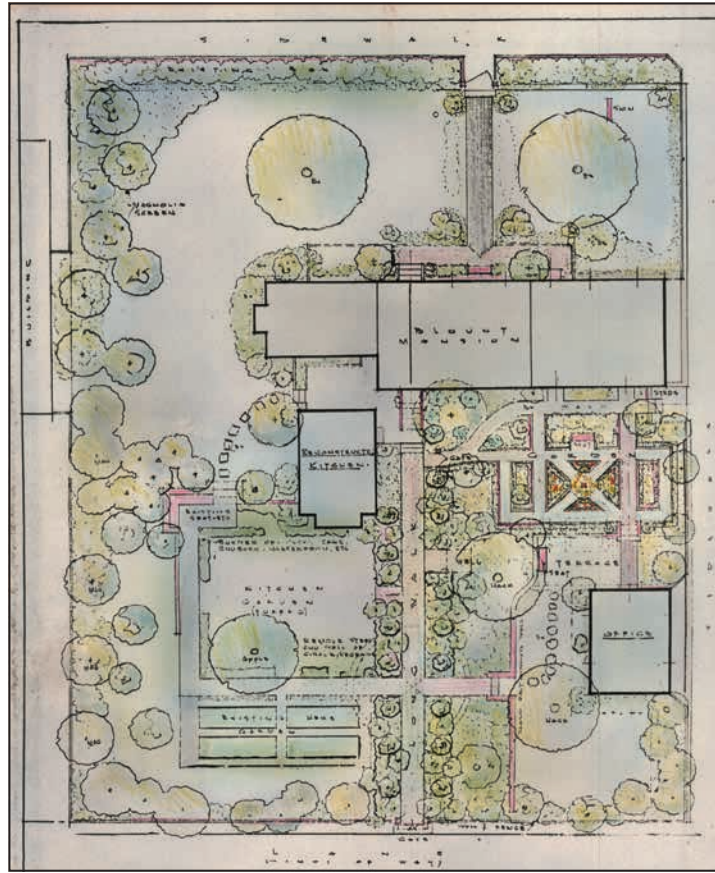
maintenance. There are too many small corners and beds with perennials, etc. which call for hand work and time."⁶ Hopkins developed a planting list that drew heavily on his work at Colonial Williamsburg. The plants on the list were common to the late eighteenth century, including ornamentals along with culinary and medicinal herbs.⁷

Hopkins' reimagining of Pitkin's earlier plan made use of many existing elements. The brick retaining walls, bench, and steps to the west of the newly rebuilt kitchen building, and the existing lawn were retained, as was a rustic well. Hopkins changed the grading of the yard to remove the

steps and wall on the long brick walk leading to the back door of the house. He removed the sunken garden on the south end of the walk and added a gate to connect it to the new parking area. The sundial was moved from the center of the garden and placed at the end of the long walk. The existing plantings were redesigned to include a dense grouping of American boxwoods to line the walk and to remove some of the higher maintenance perennials, which simplified the work needed to maintain the gardens. Hopkins' design also called for the addition of a brick terrace and a redesign of Pitkin's formal parterre just south of the house between it and Governor Blount's newly reopened office.⁸

Shortly after submitting his first drawings for the garden redesign, Hopkins died suddenly of a brain aneurism. The BMA and the KGC reached out to his associate at Williamsburg, Donald Parker, to complete Hopkins' plans and to see the project to completion.⁹ This began a long and fruitful collaboration with Parker that

(continued on page 4)



Alden Hopkins Original Plan.

Courtesy Blount Mansion Association.

Blount Mansion: An Urban Oasis.....(continued from page 3)

lasted well into the 1970s.

Since Donald Parker had worked closely with Hopkins through the years, he was familiar with the project in Knoxville. However, Parker's heavy existing workload and his assumption of the role of principal landscape architect at Colonial Williamsburg resulted in a delay between Hopkins' death and the beginning of his involvement with the work at Blount Mansion.

Parker altered Hopkins' original design by removing a parterre garden close to the southeast corner of the house, resulting in a surprise archaeological discovery that further changed plans. When workmen began to remove the existing bricks, they discovered a subterranean room, which was later proven to be a cooling room—a structure similar to a root cellar. The BMA decided to restore the cooling room and forego the planned parterre. The National Park Service helpfully submitted drawings that were used to influence the way the cooling room was rebuilt.¹⁰

In 1963, the Blount Mansion Association acquired the house directly across State Street from the Mansion, known as the Craighead-Jackson House. Built in 1818, the Craighead-Jackson House is a wonderful example of urban late-Georgian architecture. Built of bricks handmade by John Craighead's slaves, it is one of the oldest surviving brick structures in downtown Knoxville.¹¹

The house reopened in 1965 following a two-year renovation, and served as Blount Mansion's visitors center until 1997, when the current facility was opened on the opposite side of the mansion. The grounds surrounding the Craighead-Jackson House were thrown into disarray by the renovation process and needed to be redesigned. Landscape architect W. C. Frincke submitted a basic plan in 1965. His design included space for a parterre, flowering trees, dense underplanting, and called for walkways and benches.¹² The basic elements of this scheme were implemented over the next few years, but the resulting garden did not live up to the expectations of the BMA or the KGC.

In 1972, the Knoxville Garden Study Club, an organization of younger women affiliated with the KGC, retained prominent

landscape architect Edith Henderson to design a more appropriate parterre garden behind the Craighead-Jackson House.¹³ Henderson was one of the first women in the country to become an accredited landscape architect. She graduated from the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture and earned a BS from Simmons College both in 1934. Henderson went on to have a very successful career in Atlanta. Her most prominent work included Clark Howell Homes, a public housing project, and First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta.¹⁴

Henderson's design for the Craighead-Jackson garden included a geometric boxwood parterre surrounded by Southern magnolias and a variety of flowering native trees, including, dogwoods, redbuds, and crabapples. Flowerbeds between the boxwoods were festooned with colorful tulips and pansies in the winter and spring, and yellow French marigolds during the summer and fall months. The diminutive yet enchanting garden fit the space perfectly and complemented the work done by Hopkins and Parker in the main garden behind Blount Mansion.¹⁵

In contrast to the well-tended gardens immediately surrounding Blount Mansion, the beguiling garden Henderson designed in the rear of the Craighead-Jackson House has become neglected and overgrown over the ensuing four decades. The Southern magnolia trees, once appropriate to the scale of the small parterre, have grown to tower over the garden. Their dense branches have choked out all the other trees, and the magnolia's gnarled roots have wrecked the brick-paved paths. In 2019, the Blount Mansion Association initiated an ambitious plan to restore this once-charming garden to its original luster, while making modest changes to Henderson's original plan. The large Southern magnolia trees will be replaced



Blount Mansion, present-day photograph of façade.

Photo by John Haas.

with smaller varieties such as Sweet Bay or Little Gem, and all the now-vanished original native trees will be replanted. The costs of this restoration are being underwritten in large part by numerous Tennessee chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution, with each chapter sponsoring a single new tree.

From its earliest days as a historic house museum, Blount Mansion has been blessed to partner with the Knoxville Garden Club to complement our National Historic Landmark structure with an appropriate garden. As the organization embarks on the restoration of the Craighead-Jackson Garden with support from the same heritage organization, which saved the mansion nearly a century ago, we are guided by the same high standards and principals that led those women to hire only the best landscape professionals to refine this unique and special place over so many decades. We are hopeful that, working together as in the past, we will lead Blount Mansion into its second century as a museum in a manner worthy of their example. And going forward we know that our friends and partners in the Knoxville Garden Club will be alongside us, making sure the historic gardens at Blount Mansion look their best and remain a verdant garden in the heart of downtown Knoxville.

Endnotes

- 1 "History" The Knoxville Garden Club. Accessed December 13, 2019. <https://www.theknoxvillegardenclub.org/history>
- 2 William Chase Pitkin, Jr. 1884-1972. For more information, visit the website of the Cultural Landscape Foundation at <https://tclf.org/pioneer/william-pitkin>.
- 3 Opperman, Joseph. et al. "*Historic Structures Report, Cultural Landscape Report and Master Plan.*" Winston-Salem: Opperman and Associates, 2015 pg. 52
- 4 "Alden Hopkins: 1905-1960." The Cultural Landscape Foundation. Accessed December 13, 2019. <http://tclf.org/pioneer/alden-hopkins>
- 5 Opperman, Joseph. et al. "*Historic Structures Report, Cultural Landscape Report and Master Plan.*" Winston-Salem: Opperman and Associates, 2015. 57
- 6 Ibid. 58
- 7 Hopkins, Alden. 08/1960, "*Landscape Design Plan & Restoration,*" Project# 138, from Blount Mansion Association Archives.
- 8 Ibid.



Blount Mansion Garden, Pitkin plan and planting.

Courtesy Blount Mansion Association.

- 9 Donald H. Parker, 1922-1998. For more information, visit the website of the Cultural Landscape Foundation at <https://tclf.org/pioneer/donald-h-parker>.
- 10 Parker, Donald H. 9/27/1962, "*Garden Restoration by the Garden Club of Knoxville,*" plan 138/2, version 3.2.63, from Blount Mansion Association Archives.
- 11 Opperman, Joseph. et al. "*Historic Structures Report, Cultural Landscape Report and Master Plan.*" Winston-Salem: Opperman and Associates, 2015 pg. 125-126
- 12 Frincke, W.C. 03/1969 "*Site plan for Craighead-Jackson House*" from the Blount Mansion Association Archives.
- 13 Edith Harrison Henderson, 1911-2005. For more information, visit the website of the Cultural Landscape Foundation at <https://tclf.org/pioneer/edith-harrison-henderson/biography-edith-harrison-henderson>.
- 14 "Donald H. Parker 1922-1998." The Cultural Landscape Foundation. Accessed December 13, 2019. <http://tclf.org/pioneer/donald-h-parker>
- 15 Henderson, Edith H. 1972 "*For Garden Study Club. Craighead Jackson House ca. 1818,*" from Blount Mansion Association Archives.

Sources

- "Alden Hopkins: 1905-1960." The Cultural Landscape Foundation. Accessed December 13, 2019. <http://tclf.org/pioneer/alden-hopkins>
- "Donald H. Parker 1922-1998." The Cultural Landscape Foundation. Accessed December 13, 2019. <http://tclf.org/pioneer/donald-h-parker>
- "Edith Harrison Henderson." The Cultural Landscape Foundation. Accessed December 13, 2019. <http://tclf.org/pioneer/edith-harrison-henderson>
- "History" The Knoxville Garden Club. Accessed December 13, 2019. <https://www.theknoxvillegardenclub.org/history>
- Hopkins, Alden. 08/1960, "*Landscape Design Plan & Restoration,*" Project# 138, from Blount Mansion Association Archives.
- Parker, Donald H. 9/27/1962, "*Garden Restoration by the Garden Club of Knoxville,*" plan 138/2, version 3.2.63, from Blount Mansion Association Archives.
- Henderson, Edith H. 1972 "*For Garden Study Club. Craighead Jackson House ca. 1818,*" from Blount Mansion Association Archives.
- Frincke, W.C. 03/1969 "*Site plan for Craighead-Jackson House*" from the Blount Mansion Association Archives.
- Opperman, Joseph. et al. "*Historic Structures Report, Cultural Landscape Report and Master Plan.*" Winston-Salem: Opperman and Associates, 2015.



Blount Mansion, south elevation, 1955. Jim Thompson photograph (Jim Thompson Co.)

Courtesy Blount Mansion Association.

Mount Vernon's Witness Trees

By Dean Norton, Mount Vernon

"About four miles up we rode the most beautiful groves of sugar trees and for the best part of the day we admired the beauty of the trees and the richness of the land." George Washington's admiration of trees and nature was clearly evident in the 1748 entry in his *Journal of my Journey Over the Mountains*. During the forty-five years he resided at Mount Vernon he planted hundreds of trees. In 1785 while landscaping his country seat he sought and tagged many different species of trees in the surrounding forest transplanting them to newly developed landscape features such as shrubberies, wilderness areas, and serpentine avenues. Several of the trees planted under Washington's direction survive today. We like to call them living witnesses.

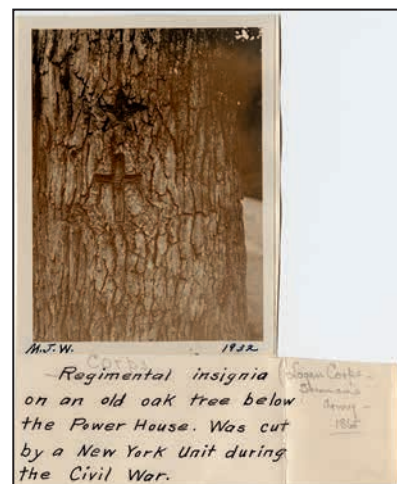
Ever since records have been kept at Mount Vernon trees have always been a concern, actually a priority. No one expressed the importance of the Mount Vernon trees better than Charles Sprague Sargent, renowned tree expert and head of the Harvard's Arnold Arboretum, in his Mount Vernon Tree report of 1926. "No trees planted by man have the human interest of the Mount Vernon trees. They belong to the nation and are one of its precious possessions. No care should be spared to preserve them."

Three trees on the estate that had added historical significance were white oaks that all dated to the 1780s. It would appear, due to their location and because they have survived to the present day, that they were purposefully planted along an entry road to the estate. While these oaks were saplings when they witnessed the early days of the republic, they had reached their eighth decade when further dramatic events unfolded.

At the conclusion of the Civil War Abraham Lincoln wanted to have a celebratory parade in the Capitol City. A Grand Review of the Armies did occur in Washington, DC on May 23 and 24 of 1865. On the 23rd approximately 80,000 men of the Army of the Potomac were reviewed and on the 24th 65,000 men of the armies from Tennessee and Georgia marched. Many of these men were under the command of General Sherman, and some of them encamped near Washington's home.

In 1863 various Union army corps had adopted new insignia including star and

cross badges. For whatever reason two of Sherman's Corps ended up in the ravine where the eighteenth-century white oaks stood. While there, the soldiers carved a star and a cross, representing both corps, on all three trees. Trying to figure out exactly which corps accomplished the carvings is difficult. In the 1932 picture taken of the



Star and Cross insignia carved on one of Mount Vernon's original white oaks from Mount Vernon Ladies' Association (MVLA) meeting minutes.



Dean Norton (left) supervising the Bartlett Tree experts as they remove the Civil War marking from the white oak, which fell on November 4, 2019.



A section of the fallen white oak with the Star and Cross insignia, which will be preserved by the MVLA.

star and the cross there is mention of Logan's Corps—Sherman's Army. That does make sense for General John A. Logan did serve with Sherman's armies, but whether it was the 15th corps or the 20th (or perhaps the 60th and 102nd New York regiments since both visited Mount Vernon), both were part of the Atlanta Campaign, and both came to Mount Vernon after the Grand Review, before returning home to their respective states. Regardless who carved the Star and the Cross, the markings on the eighteenth-century oaks represented another major historical event in our nation's history.

Unfortunately, all three trees are now gone. One

Book Reviews

In the bounty of garden titles published in 2019 many were perused: a small group were added to our shelves. Three of that number were biographical works on important figures in twentieth-century English gardening. In order of appearance, they are Naoko Abe's *The Sakura Obsession: The Incredible Story of the Plant Hunter Who Saved Japan's Cherry Blossoms*; *A Lesson in Art & Life: The Colourful World of Cedric Morris & Arthur Lett-Haines* by Hugh St. Clair; and Catherine Horwood's *Beth Chatto: A Life With Plants*. At the end of the year, in its December issue, *Gardens Illustrated* named two of the three, all first published in the United Kingdom, to its selection of the fifteen best gardening books of the year. The biography of Beth Chatto did not make the cut. These three are addressed in this review.

Sorolla: Painted Gardens and *The Artist's Garden* also came to our attention in 2019, provided pleasure, and gained their place on the shelves here. Both books focused on garden imagery in art history, principally gardens depicted in oils and watercolors, and the gardens made by artists and their friends, which inspired works on canvas, board, and paper.

We also added to our library of reference books including copies of both the first and second printings of *Journal & Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773-1774: A Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion*, which was published in 1943 by Colonial Williamsburg, Incorporated, as the third volume of its Williamsburg Restoration Historical Studies. Handsomely produced, the books appealed to me in part because of their ownership and associations. The signature and bookplate of Frances Vaughn Andrews Waddell (1867-1961) graces the copy of the first printing. She and her husband, Duncan Cameron Waddell Jr. (1869-1950), lived in Asheville, North Carolina. In 1926 they acquired Chicora Wood, the Allston family's legendary rice plantation in Georgetown County, South Carolina, and wintered there until their deaths. Many SGHS members, particularly South Carolinians, will know Chicora Wood as the home of Elizabeth Waties Allston Pringle (1845-

fell approximately forty years ago and the second fell on August of 2018. The remaining tree came down on a calm night around midnight on November 4, 2019. It was a sad day. The trees are gone, but the historic Civil War carvings have been preserved and will be a constant reminder of the eighteenth-century white oaks and all that they witnessed during their presence at Mount Vernon.

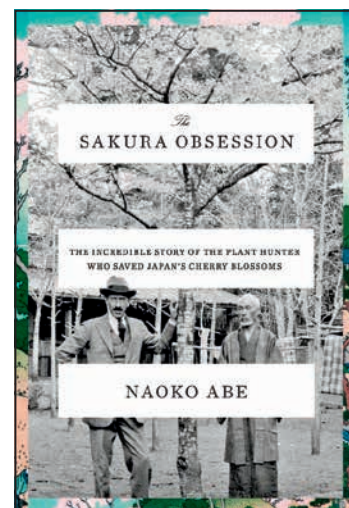
The wood from these historic trees has been cut and properly stored to be used by our preservation carpenters as needed in the historic structures and for our own wood carvers to make special items for potential donors and visitors to purchase in our museum shops.

1921) and the setting in which she wrote a series of letters, first published in the *New York Sun*, in which she recounted her experiences on the family's home rice plantation. These letters, written under the pseudonym "Patience Pennington," were collected and published as *A Woman Rice Planter* by Macmillan in 1913, with illustrations by Alice Ravenel Huger Smith. Her memoir, *Chronicles of Chicora Wood*, was published posthumously in 1922.

A copy of the October 1943 second printing of *Journal & Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773-1774* was an inscribed house present to Harry D. Kirkover "In memory of a most pleasant evening in January 1948." Below the inscription and the names of his guests Mr. Kirkover noted "The Craighills are very attractive—Regret they are not nearby." Harry D. Kirkover (1872-1958), a native of Buffalo, New York, and a prominent member of the winter colony in Camden, South Carolina, was a nationally-recognized pointer and setter breeder. His hunting dogs often won top prizes in show and field trials, three of which, "Master Benson" and two of his sons, were painted by Percival Rosseau.

The Sakura Obsession: The Incredible Story of the Plant Hunter Who Saved Japan's Cherry Blossoms, by Naoko Abe, Knopf publishers | 400 pages, 2019 | ISBN-10: 1524733571, ISBN-13: 978-1524733575 | \$27.95

Naoko Abe's biography of Collingwood "Cherry" Ingram (1880-1981) was first published in Japan in 2016. Its appeal to a people and culture that long revered cherry



(continued on page 8)

Book Reviews.....(continued from page 7)

blossoms was immediate, prize-winning, and prompted the author to return to her research. Expanded, rewritten, and translated, her book was published simultaneously in English, in Great Britain as *“Cherry” Ingram: The Englishman Who Saved Japan’s Blossoms*, and in the United States as *The Sakura Obsession: The Incredible Story of the Plant Hunter Who Saved Japan’s Cherry Blossoms*. His was a long, fascinating, privileged life as a naturalist, first as an ornithologist and seeing *Birds of the Riveria* into print in 1926. But today he is best known as a plant collector and gardener. His calling to horticulture and to Japanese cherries came after service in the Great War and his acquisition in 1919 of The Grange, an estate in Benenden, Kent, with a half-timbered, 1890s Tudor Revival house.

Mr. Ingram experienced an epiphany in spring 1920 when two mature ornamental cherry trees, which he already had noted as important survivors of The Grange’s derelict earlier gardens, came into full bloom. Naoko Abe repeats his reaction to the appearance of the larger of the two trees then, in her words “25 feet high with branches that spread 42 feet” and “smothered in silky pink blossoms.” It “would be difficult to conceive a more striking floral display” he wrote. “This was the beginning of the love story between Collingwood and the cherry blossom,” his grandson-in-law later recalled to Miss Abe.

The progress of this obsession, becoming a life-long work spanning remarkably productive years of tireless energy and effort, are the subject of *The Sakura Obsession*. His gardens at The Grange were the planting grounds for the many flowering cherries he collected in Japan, essentially becoming display gardens for those trees and other plants he acquired on expeditions and the important ornamental cherries he hybridized himself. He was, like other plant hunters of his generation, those who preceded him, as well as others who traveled in his wake, a plant collector and a promoter. He opened his garden to friends and visitors, many bearing names of high repute in English gardening history, and generously shared plants and trees. His role in the return of the “Great White Cherry” to Japan and its gardens brought esteem and admiration. In 1948 Country Life Press published his *Ornamental Cherries*, a monograph featuring 129 of the cherries he cultivated at The Grange that retains authority. The Royal Horticultural Society awarded him its Veitch Memorial Medal in 1948, and in 1952 he received the Victoria Medal of Honour, the Society’s highest recognition. *A Garden of Memories*, a memoir spanning his nine decades as a plant collector, a hybridizer, and champion of flowering cherries, was published in 1970.

Denouement came at the end of the decade with death and celebration. Florence Maude Laing Ingram (18__-1979), who became his wife in October 1906 and

joined him on his second trip to Japan in 1907, died on 29 November 1979. Collingwood Ingram and a small party of family and friends celebrated his 100th birthday at The Grange on 30 October 1980. He died on 19 May 1981. His ashes were interred in St. George’s churchyard, Benenden, beside his wife’s grave. A number of Ingram’s drawings and paintings feature among the many well-chosen illustrations in *The Sakura Obsession*, which Naoko Abe closes with short chapters including “The Grange after Ingram,” and an epilogue. A paperback edition of *The Sakura Obsession* was published in February 2020.

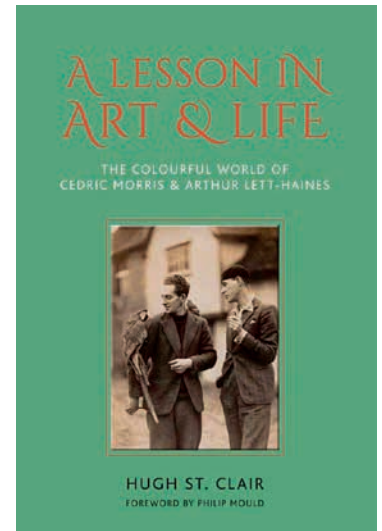


A Lesson in Art & Life: The Colourful World of Cedric Morris & Arthur Lett-Haines, by Hugh St. Clair, Pimpernel Press | 232 pages, 2019 | ISBN-10: 1910258369; ISBN-13: 978-1910258361 | \$45

On 11 November 1918 Arthur Lett-Haines (1894-1978), a young painter living in London, and his wife, Aimee, gave an impromptu party at 2 Carlyle Square to celebrate the Armistice. Their invited friends, artists and musicians, arrived at the party, some in the company of friends of their own, one of whom was another artist, Cedric Morris (1889-1982). This was

the joyous setting in which the two men formed an initial bond, a friendship which became the life-long partnership that Hugh St. Clair celebrates in *A Lesson in Art & Life: The Colourful World of Cedric Morris & Arthur Lett-Haines*. It was a coupling, both personal and professional, that culminated in their many years at Benton End, Suffolk, where the house, the handsome, color-rich gardens cultivated by Cedric, and its grounds were the setting of the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing. Theirs was an evolving union of talents and passions, for flowers, gardening, and painting, that was not unlike Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicholson’s marriage of writing and gardening at Sissinghurst. Through time Cedric Morris and Vita Sackville-West exchanged plants with each other, and their gardens were enriched with these gifts.

Cedric Morris and Lett-Haines would first establish themselves in 1919 at Newlyn, on the quay, in a pair of



conjoined fishermen's cottages. There they enjoyed the company of friends and fellow artists, but the experience was short-lived. In 1921 they were in Paris, in an apartment, that became the base of operations for their work as painters, as students in the city's academies, and the place from which they frequently traveled to paint. In 1927, they were back in London, in a studio apartment at 32 Great Ormond Street, where Cedric was enjoying the rewards of increasingly successful gallery exhibitions. But this arrangement, too, would prove temporary. As he later recounted to Tony Venison, "There was too much of a social whirl, I couldn't get any work done and there weren't any landscapes out of the window."

The path to Benton End began with their relocation to Suffolk in 1929, and to The Pound, taking up a lease on a timber-framed house with Tudor origins, plaster-fronted gables, and Queen Anne additions. It also had a derelict

garden that Cedric Morris would soon make his own. His improvements at The Grange took on a new importance in 1932 when Vivien M. Gribble Doyle-Jones, their landlord, died on 6 February and bequeathed The Grange to Cedric Morris and his partner. Visits to Tidcombe Manor in Wiltshire, and stays there with its owners, his friend, Paul Odo Cross, and Angus Wilson, were critical to his garden-making at The Pound and later at Benton End. Cedric



A garden painting by Cedric Morris.

Morris apparently first saw *Iris plicatas* at Tidcombe Manor, where "he would follow Angus Wilson round and on one weekend in 1934 when the irises were in bloom he became entranced watching Wilson delicately using tweezers to cross-pollinate his irises. Detecting a fellow enthusiast, Wilson offered him some seedlings to take home to The Pound, where Cedric began to experiment for himself." As Hugh St. Clair concludes, "It was the start of an obsession and a passion." The garden at The Pound, filled with the flowers he cultivated, soon provided subjects for his flower paintings.

Life continued apace at The Pound and in London into the mid-1930s, and with exhibitions bringing wider recognition and sales of their works including Morris's signature flower paintings and Suffolk landscapes. Near the end of 1936 the idea of conducting an art school close on The Pound took form, and a building in the nearby village of Dedham was secured for adaptation as the new school. The opening of the East Anglian School of Painting and

Drawing coincided with Easter 1937. Its first session ended in October 1937. This schedule became the school standard. Lucian Freud, the school's best-known student, arrived in 1939, and was one of the students displaced when fire effectively destroyed the school premises in late July 1939.

A phoenix in the form of the school and gardens at Benton End would rise from the ashes. Angus Wilson, who launched Cedric Morris on his long-since celebrated path as a propagator and breeder of irises, again played a critical role. He proposed to buy a house that could accommodate the school, using an inheritance received by his partner Paul Odo Cross, and let it on good terms. Fate had dealt another fine, deserving hand to Cedric and his partner. As Hugh St. Clair relates "They started to look for somewhere that had a good-sized garden with some out-buildings or a series of rooms that could be converted into

artists' studios. They fell in love with a ramshackle, part-sixteenth-century farmhouse with an overgrown garden of two-and-a-half acres at Benton End on the edge of the market town of Hadleigh."

After classes in make-shift quarters in spring and summer, students of the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing, including Lucian Freud, welcomed the opening of the newly fitting-up premises in autumn 1940. Cedric Morris and Arthur

Lett-Haines continued their instruction and guidance to students, Cedric continued to paint and exhibit, producing a portrait of Lucian Freud in 1941 that is now in the Tate Gallery, while Lett effectively served as a school administrator and cook, with the assistance of friends, on occasion Elizabeth David. Arthur Girling was engaged as the gardener. Evening classes were scheduled for local residents as a measure of good will. Seeing the success of the school and wanting to ease the financial obligation the rent payments represented, Paul Odo Cross decided in 1941 to convey the property to Cedric without restriction.

With the episodic treatment of gardening in the opening and middle chapters of *A Lesson in Art & Life*, readers will especially appreciate a chapter, simply titled "The Garden" as the author draws the book to a close. These thirteen pages are rich reading, if also an all too brief account of Cedric Morris's extraordinary gardening and his propagation of some ninety new irises many, if not most,

(continued on page 10)

Book Reviews.....(continued from page 9)

with “Benton” as the prefix of their name. Color was ever in the forefront of his efforts. Readers learn of the sale of his irises by Orpington’s Nursery and Wallace’s Nursery which in its 1947 catalogue offered twenty-one Benton End irises including ‘Benton Edward Windsor’, ‘Benton Baggage’, ‘Benton Mocha’, and ‘Benton Persephone.’ In 1955 his ‘Benton Cordelia’, praised by Tony Venison and appreciated for “its dark mauve buds opening to milky orchid pink with deep rosy tangerine beard and silky feel,” was awarded the Dykes Medal. Rhizomes were dispatched to the American market and flowers from the Benton End gardens were shipped to Constance Spry’s shop in London.

The decade of the 1950s saw further plantings in the gardens at Benton End and continued success for the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing, its teachers and students, at the easel and in gallery exhibitions. In the gardens Cedric Morris had the assistance of Nigel Scott who came to Benton End in spring 1952, cultivated its flowers, and joined Cedric on painting and plant hunting trips to Tenerife and Portugal each winter, into January 1957 when he took his life. ‘Benton Nigel’, an “iris with two shades of rich violet and paler edges,” created by Cedric and his protégé and grown at Sissinghurst, is one memorial to Nigel’s brilliant skills. Another was Cedric’s friendship with Beth Chatto, who Nigel brought to Benton End to see its gardens and meet their creator in the summer of 1952. Her later recall of the visit captures their genius and the formative importance both would have on her own gardening.

“I remember my first impression so clearly. Cedric dressed in crumpled corduroys with a small silk scarf above his shirt was smoking a pipe, which he held with his beautiful slender hands. After tea, he showed us all round the garden. It was not conventionally designed with carefully selected groups of trees and shrubs creating a background or leading the eye to some premeditated feature or walk. There were surprisingly few trees and shrubs, mostly ancient fruit trees, dotted around. A tall cherry wreathed in ropes of wisteria made the principal feature. There was an area divided into rectangles by narrow paths, edged by low box hedges. Pillars of old shrub roses and several huge clumps of the sword-leaved yucca glories were within. The rest was a bewildering, mind-stretching, eye-widening canvas of colour, textures and shapes, created primarily with bulbous and herbaceous plants. Later I came to realise it was possibly the finest collection of such plants in the country, but that first afternoon there were far too many unknown plants for me to see them, let alone recognize them.”

The appearance of the gardens a decade later are noted by Hugh St. Clair in his opening lines of the penultimate chapter of *A Lesson in Art & Life*. “By the early 1960s

the garden at Benton End had reached a glorious state. Cedric’s experiments with delicate and variegated tones and their juxtaposition with neighboring plants created a dense panoply of everchanging colour. By now, some of the exciting finds from his overseas travels in the previous few years had become well established.” Alas, there are few images of the extraordinary gardens at Benton End, where student artists and their teachers painted daily, in *A Lesson in Art & Life*. One such, Kathleen Hale’s “The Garden at Benton End,” leave this reader—and others—wanting far more.

Even as the operation of the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing wound down, Cedric Morris and Arthur Lett-Haines continued to paint and to exhibit to acclaim through the 1960s and well into the 1970s. But the effects of aging were increasingly present in their lives. Late in autumn 1976 Cedric Morris embarked on what would be the last of his winter holidays in Portugal, returning to Benton End on 24 March 1977. Arthur Lett-Haines died on 25 February 1978. On 11 December 1979 Jenny Robinson hosted a ninetieth birthday luncheon party for Cedric Morris at her house in Boxford. The company and good wishes of friends included that of Tony Venison (1930-2019), who had begun his long service (1979-1994) as gardening editor of *Country Life* that year, and Beth Chatto, who had coaxed a pot of *Narcissus minor* ‘Cedric Morris’ into bloom for the occasion. From Peter Beales, to whom Morris had given seedlings, cuttings, and shoots from Benton End, one of which, a white rambler rose, he marketed as ‘Sir Cedric Morris,’ he received a photograph of himself beside the namesake rose. Cedric Morris died on 8 February 1982. He bequeathed the contents of the gardens at Benton End to Jenny Robinson with the request they be distributed after his death. Established plants and those from rows of iris seedlings were given to friends, plant collectors, and the British Iris Society. A collection of papers found in storage, letters, diaries, and notebooks, went to the Tate Gallery. In 1984 Richard Morphet mounted a one-man show at the Tate, “Cedric Morris,” with an exhibition catalogue of the same name. Other exhibitions followed, celebrating his works and those of his colleagues and students at Benton End. In recent decades, as Mr. St. Clair writes in the “Epilogue,” his irises have gained in popularity and his paintings have risen in appreciation and value at auctions. Sarah Cooke, who has collected twenty-five of the ninety registered Cedric Morris irises, won a gold medal at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2015 for their handsome blooms. Works continue to enter museum and private collections. Benton End was acquired by a charitable foundation in 2018 with plans to recreate Cedric Morris’s garden and offer painting classes. All said, however, a fuller, deserved appreciation

of his work as a flower painter and gardener awaits, with opportunities for other scholars ahead. Surprisingly, except for a paragraph-length account in the introduction, Cedric Morris, his flower paintings, the garden at Benton End, and his much-admired bearded irises, are absent from the pages of Jackie Bennett's appealing *The Artist's Garden*.



Beth Chatto: A Life With Plants, by Catherine Horwood
[Pimpernel Press | Hardcover, 288 pages, 2019 | ISBN-10:
1910258822; ISBN-13: 978-1910258828 | \$45

In her career as a plantswoman, garden writer, and nurseryman, Beth Chatto (1923-2018) enjoyed the fortune of good timing, good friends, and her characteristically on-point instincts. Celebrations attended her successes and honors came her way. She opened the Unusual Plants Nursery in 1967 and introduced customers to both new plants and new ways of gardening, namely her legendary, now long-accepted theory of “the right plant in the right place.” The nursery prospered and in 1977 she won the first of ten gold medals at the Chelsea Flower Show. In the event 1987 represented a pivotal point, simultaneously a culmination, with the receipt of the Royal Horticultural Society's Victoria Medal of Honour and its Lawrence Memorial Medal, acknowledging her contributions to horticulture, her decision to cease exhibiting at Chelsea, and a renewed examination of the prospects ahead. In the space of these twenty years success came at every turn. *The Dry Garden*, her first book, was published in 1978 and followed in 1982 by *The Damp Garden*. Her *Plant Portraits* appeared in 1985.



Catherine Horwood provides a fascinating account of these years in her *Beth Chatto: A Life With Plants* with a brisk, engaging narrative. Her words are complemented by the many well-chosen black-and-white and color photographs that are appropriately positioned to illuminate her narrative and enhance the reader's pleasure. *Beth Chatto* is an excellent example of book design and in marked contrast to that of *A Lesson in Art & Life: The Colourful World of Cedric Morris & Arthur Lett-Haines* in which the same publisher gangs both the fewer—and altogether too few—black-and-white and color images in two groups.

Having shared the particulars of her birth as Betty Diana Little on 27 June 1923, her early childhood as a

fledgling in the family's cottage garden at Great Chesterford, Essex, and her education at the Colchester County High School for Girls, Ms. Horwood moves ahead with the introduction of Andrew Chatto, Beth's completion of a teacher training degree, and her marriage to Andrew Chatto in August 1943. The grandson and namesake of a founder of Chatto & Windus, the prominent, well-respected publisher, Andrew Edward Chatto (1909-1999) then operated a fruit orchard at White Barn Farm, Elmstead Market. He brought important connections, friendships, and a long-studied knowledge of horticulture to their union. His experience as a commercial orchardist would prove invaluable when Beth later decided to enter the commercial nursery world.

As Catherine Horwood relates, theirs was a wedding of interests and talents, one that nurtured her development as a plantswoman and writer. Critical, too, were her close friendships with leading gardening figures. Cedric Morris was a mentor, from the early 1950s until his death in 1982. With Christopher Lloyd (1921-2006) she formed warm, lasting bonds of mutual appreciation and respect, which shine through photographs of the two, when together, and in the pages of *Dear Friend and Gardener*, an exchange of letters published in 1998. Graham Stuart Thomas (1909-2003), who she first met in the company of Cedric Morris at Benton End in the 1950s, was a trusted friend whose knowledge of plants was often sought and always reliable.

Christopher Lloyd also proved to be an ideal traveling companion. First on a driving tour of gardens in Scotland in June 1988 and in early autumn 1989 on an extended speaking and pleasure tour, effectively round the world, that began in New Zealand: the pair continued to Australia and Canada, with their final stop in Minnesota where Beth spoke at the arboretum on the invitation of Cole Burrell. These years also saw the publication of *Beth Chatto's Garden Notebook* in 1988 and *The Green Tapestry* in 1989. The next year Christopher Lloyd took Beth on a day trip that, in combination with her observation of a dried-up riverbed in New Zealand and a later visit to The Burren, County Clare, Ireland, travels both made with “Christo,” proved epiphanic. Walking after a picnic lunch, the pair came upon Derek Jarman (1942-1994) and his Prospect Cottage at Dungeness, on the desolate Kent coast.

Seeing plants thrive in the most difficult circumstances set Beth Chatto to planning one of her last great projects, The Gravel Garden, in the nursery gardens surrounding White Barn House. The experience was relived for readers in the pages of *Beth Chatto's Gravel Garden* in 2000. *Beth Chatto's Woodland Garden*, the last of her first-run garden books, was published in 2002, the year in which she received the Order of the British Empire, for her

(continued on page 12)

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

services to horticulture, from Prince Charles. In 2004 *The Damp Garden* was published in a new edition and in 2008 her woodland garden book was reissued as *Beth Chatto's Shade Garden*. That same year, 2008, the Garden Museum honored Beth with a retrospective exhibition and a special edition of its journal.

The reception accorded the exhibition gave rise, in turn, to a decision by the Garden Museum to collect the papers of the leading garden figures in the United Kingdom. Beth Chatto, together with John Brookes and Penelope Hobhouse, agreed at the outset to participate in the museum's initiative. Therein lies the genesis of this biography. Catherine Horwood was engaged to assist Beth in the preparation of her papers for deposit in the Garden

Museum. The transfer of her archive occurred in 2017. Beth Chatto died on 13 May 2018 at White Barn House. Her funeral was held at the Church of St. Anne and St. Laurence, the setting of her wedding in 1943. "The church and Beth's seagrass coffin were decorated with flowers and foliage from the gardens she had created. She was buried with Andrew and her grave was strewn with more flowers, including many of the beautiful bearded irises bred by her great friend and mentor Cedric Morris, a perfect tribute to one of Britain's greatest and most influential gardeners."

Davyd Foard Hood

Isinglass

Vale, North Carolina

Of Interest

An extraordinary group of more than one thousand rare maps and images has been donated to the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon by Richard H. Brown, a noted New York collector. Included is an historic 1781 French map of the British defenses of New York that helped General Washington end the Revolutionary War. The donation, reported by Michael E. Ruane in *The Washington Post* (February 7, 2020), contains thirteen maps once used by Washington's French subordinate and Revolutionary War hero, the Marquis de Lafayette. Also part of the collection is Peter Jefferson and Joshua Fry's 1751 map of Maryland and Virginia, showing the most inhabited parts of Virginia, the province of Maryland, and part of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and North Carolina. In addition to maps and prints, the donation includes the *Atlantic Neptune*, a massive multivolume atlas dating to 1776. According to Jim Ambuske, the library's digital historian, this was "arguably the most important atlas published in the eighteenth century to depict North America." The collection, which Ambuske considers to be the best of its kind in the country, will eventually be available to scholars, in person, and later some will go on public display. Most of the pieces have been digitized and are online as part of the Digital Collections from the Washington Library.



"Map of Florida, Carolina, and the Gulf Coast," cartographic map by Christian Friedrich von der Heiden, ca. 1760. Richard H. Brown Revolutionary War Map Collection.

In Print

Everything for the Garden, by Judith B. Tankard, Richard C. Nylander, Alan Emmet, and Virginia Lopez Begg | Historic New England publisher; paperback | ISBN-10: 0989059847, ISBN-13: 978-0989059848 | 2019, List Price: \$29.95

Everything for the Garden follows the wonderful process of home gardening in America and its dependence upon a myriad of how-to books, catalogs, and advertising material that promise to provide “everything for the garden,” from information on design and plant selection to tools, clothing, and pink flamingos.

The book is for anyone who enjoys gardening at home, visiting historic landscapes, or admiring plants and flowers in art and culture. Colorfully illustrated by material from Historic New England’s extensive collection, the book celebrates the objects and literature that people used to make and enjoy gardens from the mid-nineteenth century to today. Essays by well-known experts include Virginia Lopez Begg on garden clubs and horticultural societies; Alan Emmet on garden portraits; Richard Nylander on a cornucopia of catalogs, garden architecture, and ornament; and Judith Tankard on garden writing, designing, and making the garden.

Inventing Acadia: Painting and Place in Louisiana catalog of a recent exhibition at the New Orleans Museum of Art, 2019.



With its dense forests and swamps, Louisiana captured the imagination of an international group of painters and writers who viewed its landscape as a fascinating, untamed wilderness. Starting in the 1840s when French émigrés brought the Barbizon school

to New Orleans, the state attracted artists from Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the greater United States. Often painted as a tropical paradise, the land also bore the scars of colonialism and the forced migrations of slavery. *Inventing Acadia: Painting and Place in Louisiana* explores this complex history, situating Louisiana landscape art amid the cultural shifts of the nineteenth century. The authors of this 231-page text engage not only with artworks but also with the issues that informed them—representations of race and industry, international trade, and environmentalism—which are then carried into the present with a look at the work of contemporary artist Regina Agu.

The exhibition catalog includes contributions by Anna Arabindan-Kesson and Mía L. Bagneris, Aurora Yartzeth Avilés García, Katie A. Pfohl, and Kelly Presutti, along with a conversation between Regina Agu and Ryan N. Dennis.

For ordering information visit NOMA at: <https://noma.org/shop/inventing-acadia-painting-and-place-in-louisiana/>



New England Members in the News

Maine member **Val Libby** is on the board of the Blue Hill Historical Society and is heading up an exhibit on one-hundred years of womens' lingerie (1820-1920) to commemorate Maine's bicentennial of statehood. Boston, Massachusetts member **Judith B Tankard's** book *Ellen Shipman and the American Garden* won the 2019 J. B. Jackson Book Prize and her book, *Gardens of the Arts and Crafts Movement*, was cited by *The*

English Garden magazine as one of the year's ten best garden books. Her article on Greenwood Gardens, a Garden Conservancy Preservation Project, appeared in the Autumn 2019 issue *Hortus*, followed by an article on Arts & Crafts Gardens in the Winter 2019 issue. She also contributed to a Cultural Landscape Study by Heritage Landscapes on Beatrix Farrand's campus planning at Yale University.

The Garden Club of Virginia's Centennial

On May 13, 1920, eight Virginia garden clubs gathered in Richmond to form a state federation, ultimately leading to the founding of the Garden Club of Virginia (GCV). Some of their earliest efforts led to the restoration and preservation of trees along Virginia's highways, and they also were instrumental in the founding of the Virginia State Park system.

In 1929, the GCV decided to open private homes and gardens to fund the restoration of Commonwealth historic public gardens and landscapes. Each year, the GCV's member clubs organize and host approximately thirty tours across Virginia during Historic Garden Week. Restorations are largely funded with proceeds from this signature event. To date, the GCV has undertaken more than forty restoration projects—including Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, the University of Virginia, Stratford Hall, James Madison's Montpelier, and the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library in Staunton.

The Garden Club of Virginia, now with forty-seven clubs and more than 3,300 members, has the same mission today as when it was founded: to preserve the beauty of

Virginia, to conserve the gifts of nature, and to challenge future generations to build on this heritage as it celebrates its 100th anniversary on May 13, 2020. Many member clubs have been sponsoring special events during this



Representatives of the Albemarle, Rivanna, and Charlottesville Garden Clubs took part in the ceremony. Photo courtesy Thomas Jefferson Foundation.



Over fifty members of the Garden Club of Virginia, along with Monticello staff and Jefferson interpreter Bill Barker, gathered on Monticello's West Portico. Photo courtesy Thomas Jefferson Foundation.



Monticello's Curator of Plants, Peggy Cornett, led GCV members on a tour of the flower gardens following the ceremony. Photo courtesy Thomas Jefferson Foundation.

anniversary year.

The GCV has had a longstanding relationship with Monticello, beginning in 1927 when the club organized a flower show to raise an impressive \$7,000 to save some of the original trees planted by Thomas Jefferson around the house. The flower gardens, which virtually disappeared after Jefferson's death, were restored by GCV between 1939 and 1941. Most recently, the original Kitchen Road that ran between Mulberry Row and the South Wing was restored with the support of GCV in 2013-15. To commemorate the GCV's Centennial, three local garden clubs—the Albemarle, Charlottesville, and Rivanna—gave three sugar maples to Monticello; and a tree planting

ceremony was held on February 24, 2020. In her opening remarks Monticello President Leslie Greene Bowman thanked the Garden Clubs' gift of these sugar maples, adding, "They not only add to the natural beauty of the mountaintop, but they also help perpetuate Jefferson's lasting legacy of tree-planting for generations to come."

A series of Founders Day events will be held in Richmond on May 13 and 14 at the Virginia Museum of History and Culture. The culmination of the GCV's Centennial Celebration will be the grand opening of the historical exhibition, "*A Landscape Saved: Garden Club of Virginia at 100*," which will be open to the public until early fall 2020.

Native Plant Leader Margie Jenkins Dies

By John Sykes and Anne Legett

Margie Yates Jenkins died at age 98 on January 29, 2020. Southern Garden History Society (SGHS) members were first introduced to "Miss Margie" during the Society's 2011 annual meeting in Baton Rouge. Louisiana's leading plantswoman, Margie was known throughout the deep South for her knowledge and love of native plants.

In 1960, Margie and her late husband, Bryant, began Jenkins Farm and Nursery in the rolling hills outside of Amite, Louisiana. Through the years, the wholesale nursery grew to focus on the propagation of rare and native plants. The annual publication of the Jenkins plant catalog was much anticipated by local landscape professionals. Miss Margie's work with native plants was inspired by a course she attended taught by Louisiana State University professor Neil Odenwald.

Visitors to the rural nursery always received her warm and generous hospitality, often being treated to meals at her table. Her knowledge of native plants, especially native azaleas, was legendary, as was the collecting and cultivating old garden plants significant to historic Southern gardens. Miss Margie helped re-cultivate the *Franklinia alatomahia* first discovered in the South by William Bartram in 1777. She helped spread its re-introduction into the Southern landscape. Miss Margie also helped in the recreation of historic landscapes providing early native examples to Magnolia Mound in Baton Rouge, Mobile Botanical Gardens, and other historic sites.

Among her many awards were Louisiana Nursery Person of the Year (1993); the Louisiana Nursery Association's James Foret Award (2000);



Photo by Craig Rowley.

John Sykes with Miss Margie.

the Distinguished Service Award given by the Azalea Society of America (2007); and the DeFatta Award from the Louisiana Native Plant Society (2002). She was the first woman to be honored with the Slater Wight Memorial Award in 2005 from the Southern Nursery Association for her contribution "to the advancement of the industry in the south."

Miss Margie exemplified the SGHS mission through her dedication to cultivation and promotion of native plants in the Southern landscape. In 2003, the late SGHS Board member Marion Drummond said, "I think that the one adjective that describes Margie is generosity because she gives of herself, she gives plants, she gives information, and she gives help to people." She was a valuable resource for the Society and its members and a very dear friend who will be missed.



Southern Garden History Society

P.O. Box 15752

Winston-Salem, NC 27113

Presort Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Waynesboro, VA
Permit 129

Magnolia grandiflora reproduced courtesy
of Rare Book Div., Special Collections
Dept., UVA Library.



Awards and Scholarships

The *Flora Ann Bynum Medal* is awarded to recipients who have rendered outstanding service to the Society. Nominations may be made at any time by any member.

The *William Lanier Hunt Award* recognizes members, non-members, and/or organizations that have made an exceptional contribution to the fields closely aligned with the goals of the Society. Nominations may be made by any member.

The title *Honorary Director* (Board of Directors) may be bestowed on individuals who have rendered exceptional service and made significant contributions to the Society.

The *Certificate of Merit* is presented to a member or non-member whose work has advanced the mission and goals of the Society.

Society *Scholarships* assist students in attending the Society's annual meeting and are awarded to bona fide students enrolled in college and university majors relevant to the mission and goals of the Society and to new professionals in the field.

Details, requirements, and directions for submitting applications are posted on the SGHS website: www.southerngardenhistory.org. For those without internet access, a copy of this document can be mailed. Contact Rebecca Hodson, SGHS Administrator.

Annual Membership Dues

The Society's membership year is from *August 1—July 31*.
Membership categories:

<i>Benefactor</i>	<i>\$500 and above*</i>
<i>Patron</i>	<i>\$250</i>
<i>Sustainer</i>	<i>\$125</i>
<i>Institution or Business</i>	<i>\$100</i>
<i>Joint</i>	<i>\$60</i>
<i>(two individuals living in the same household)</i>	
<i>Individual</i>	<i>\$40</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>\$15</i>

***Contact the membership administrator if you would like to pay more than \$500 via credit card. For more membership information, contact:**

For more membership information, contact:

Rebecca Hodson, SGHS Administrator

Post Office Box 15752

Winston-Salem, NC 27113

Phone: (336) 298-6938

Mobile: (336) 655-2286

Email: membership@southerngardenhistory.org

Memberships can now be made electronically on our website!
www.southerngardenhistory.org

Deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of Magnolia is May 1, 2020.

Officers

President: John Sykes, Baton Rouge, LA

Vice-President: Perry Mathewes,
Purcellville, VA

Interim Secretary: Susan McLeod

Epstein, Charleston, SC

Treasurer: Gail Griffin, Bethesda, MD

Editors:

Peggy Cornett

Monticello, P.O.B. 316

Charlottesville, VA 22902

(434) 984-9816

Cell (434) 465-5297

pcornett@monticello.org

Kenneth M. McFarland

9 Marble Street

Brandon, VT 05733

Cell (540) 760-9337

[kennethm.mcfarland@](mailto:kennethm.mcfarland@gmail.com)

gmail.com

Associate Editor:

Staci Catron

scatron@atlantahistorycenter.com

Atlanta History Center

130 W. Paces Ferry Rd, NW

Atlanta, GA 30305

(404) 814-4046

Book Review Editor:

Davyd Foard Hood

Isinglass

6907 Old Shelby Rd.

Vale, NC 28168

(704) 462-1847

Board of Directors

Charles Bradberry, Nacodoches, TX

Ced Dolder, Atlanta, GA

Lee C. Dunn, Atlanta, GA

Randy Harelson, New Roads, LA

Susan Hitchcock, Columbia, SC

Kathleen Perilloux, Baton Rouge, LA

William D. Rieley, Charlottesville, VA

Andrea Sprott, Charlotte, NC

Justin Stelter, Franklin, TN

Immediate Past President:

Susan Haltom, Ridgeland, MS

Honorary Board Members

Staci Catron, Atlanta, GA

A. Jefferson Lewis, III, Athens, GA

Kenneth M. McFarland, Brandon, VT

Ben Page, Nashville, TN

Mary Anne Pickens, Columbus, TX

Jane Campbell Symmes, Madison, GA

William C. Welch, College Station, TX