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BOOK, MANUSCRIPT & VISUAL ARTS DONATIONS
On a clear morning in July 1804, Alexander Hamilton stepped onto a boat at the edge of the Hudson River. He was bound for a New Jersey dueling ground to settle his bitter dispute with Aaron Burr. Hamilton took just two men with him: his “second” for the duel and Dr. David Hosack.

As historian Victoria Johnson reveals in her groundbreaking biography, Hosack was one of the few points the duelists did agree on. Summoned that morning because of his role as the beloved Hamilton family doctor, he was also a close friend of Burr. A brilliant surgeon and a world-class botanist, Hosack—who until now has been lost in the fog of history—was a pioneering thinker who shaped a young nation.

Born in New York City, he was educated in Europe and returned to America inspired by his newfound knowledge. He assembled a plant collection so spectacular and diverse that it amazes botanists today, conducted some of the first pharmaceutical research in the United States, and introduced new surgeries to America. His tireless work championing public health and science earned him national fame and praise from the likes of Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Alexander von Humboldt, and the Marquis de Lafayette.

One goal drove Hosack above all others: to build the Republic’s first botanical garden. Despite innumerable obstacles and near-constant resistance, Hosack triumphed when, by 1810, his Elgin Botanic Garden at last crowned twenty acres of Manhattan farmland.

“Where others saw real estate and power, Hosack saw the landscape as a pharmacopeia able to bring medicine into the modern age” (Eric W. Sanderson, author of *Mannahatta*). Today what remains of America’s first botanical garden lies in the heart of midtown, buried beneath Rockefeller Center.

Whether collecting specimens along the banks of the Hudson River, lecturing before a class of rapt medical students, or breaking the fever of a young Philip Hamilton, David Hosack was an American visionary who has been too long forgotten. Alongside other towering figures of the post-Revolutionary generation, he took the reins of a nation. In unearthing the dramatic story of his life, Johnson offers a lush depiction of the man who gave a new voice to the powers and perils of nature.
“If Rockefeller Center is haunted, a likely candidate for the ghost is David Hosack, the doctor-botanist who-as one student said, “as good as the theater,” and so in Johnson’s storytelling. He weaves his biography with threads of history—political, medical and scientific—and the tale of an up-and-coming New York City. An innovative medical practitioner, he was the friend and doctor Hamilton and Burr had in attendance on that July morning along the docks; the gentlemen crowding into the Tontine Coffee House for the news of the day. The book’s botany-related passages are particularly vivid. The author writes of plants delightfully, precisely as Hosack himself might have done.”

Penelope Bowlands, The Wall Street Journal

“You’ve listened to Hamilton, you devoured his life. But you might not have read up on David Hosack, the American botanist, and doctor who accompanied Hamilton and Burr on their fateful duel. While he wasn’t paid in advance, he was trusted with civility, and in American Eden: David Hosack, Botany, and Medicine in the Garden of the Early Republic, you can read more about his life as a pioneering botanist, pharmacologist, and surgeon.”

Mary Beth Griggs, Popular Science

“American Eden is one of those rare books... it surprises by its originality, it impresses with its deep scholarship, and it excites with its beautiful writing. Victoria Johnson has the gift of a storyteller and the tenacity of a detective... her descriptions of medicine, botany, and politics in the early republic are not only compelling but also exhaustively researched.”

Andrea Waltz, author of The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt’s New World

“Young people get the idea for their most recent book: “I grew up in a house filled with maps of New York City from every century because my father was a retired professor of urban planning who specializes in the history of the city. On family trips, both my parents loved to walk us kids around cities and show us the layers of the past—how to detect traces of what had vanished. I was thunderstruck the first time I heard that one of the most iconic urban spaces in the world today was once the leafy, rural site of the nation’s first botanical garden. In American Eden, I try to whet readers back to that world completely.”

Victoria Johnson, Goodreads
Founded in 1928, Cherokee Garden Club derives its name from the Cherokee Rose, which was introduced to Georgia in 1757 and is the Georgia state flower. As explained in the club’s history, Cherokee GC came into existence with “the advent of the automobile…the exodus to the ‘country on the outskirts of the city’…newfound spaciousness…gardens compatible with the wooded fringes and gentle contours of the land…and the great growth of GARDEN CLUBS.”

At the organizational meeting, 32 charter members set the tone for the club. They required that each member demonstrate a deep and abiding interest in plants and flowers, and a willingness to share her knowledge. They also decided to develop a garden at Egleston Children’s Hospital. The course was set for members’ mutual interests and for the commitment to civic contributions. Ever since, Cherokee GC camaraderie has been the galvanizing force among its members as they learned together and contributed to the community together.

Cherokee Garden Club recently celebrated its 90th birthday with an exquisite luncheon at the home of club member Scottie Schoen, and her husband, Chris. While enjoying the Schoen gardens and the seated lunch in the home, a special link with the past was recalled by many in attendance. The previous occupants of the Schoen’s home were Anne Coppedge Carr and her husband, Julian. A historic property on Northside Drive in Atlanta, it was the location of the Garden Library’s founding by the Cherokee Garden Club. In 1973, as head of the club’s “project-finding committee,” Anne Carr visited the garden library at Cheekwood Estate and Gardens in Nashville, Tennessee, and decided to pursue the establishment of a garden library in Atlanta. With the approval of her fellow garden club members, a committee was established to explore how to go about such an endeavor.

The planning committee, which met at the Carr home, comprised of Cherokee Garden Club members, as well as scholars and experts within the Atlanta gardening community. They formed a common bond and in the spring of 1975 started the Cherokee Garden Library with a tiny collection of books housed in a former telephone closet on the ground floor of McElreath Hall at the Atlanta Historical Society (now the Atlanta History Center). They also formed a common love of what came to be called “Library Cookies,” which Anne Carr inevitably served at each of their planning meetings.

The Cherokee Garden Library quickly outgrew its designated space, moving to a nearby room in the same area of McElreath Hall. With its stalwart planning committee having set high expectations, the Garden Library first served as a resource to the Atlanta Historical Society and to the 33 garden clubs that helped the Society maintain the grounds of the Swan House and subsequently the Tullie Smith House (now the Smith Family Farm).

Members of the Cherokee Garden Club were instrumental in the acquisition of special collections, which would expand the Library’s mission to that of a research and preservation center. Early and longtime garden club leaders who were major forces in the effort to preserve material related to gardening and horticulture in the South were celebrated as “Legends of the Library” in 2013. In addition to recognizing the founder, Anne Coppedge Carr, other “Legends” celebrated were Virginia Groves Beach, Alice Hurt Carr, Beverly “Bee” Butler Cohen, Louise Staton Gunn, Patricia “Pat” Rand Haggett, Mary “Funkie” Bowler Miller, Lamar Ellis Oglesby, and Edith “Eddie” Rushway Wright.

Photograph Courtesy of Paula Hennessy.
Since 2005, when the collection officially merged with the Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, it has continued to tell the story of horticulture and botanical history in the Southeastern United States, as well as areas of influence from throughout America, Europe, and Asia. Research and close collaboration with the Goizueta Gardens on the grounds of the Atlanta History Center complete the package for gardeners of all stripes, who strive to learn about and preserve the garden history of the Southeast. The Garden Library is a resource that is available, free of charge, to all who want to “dig into” the exciting and historic holdings of the collection.

Throughout the Garden Library’s 43-year history, Cherokee Garden Club has remained committed to its mission, helping to grow the collection to over 32,000 books, periodicals, landscape drawings, seed catalogs, and related ephemera. Cherokee GC members have led the way to ensure the future of the Garden Library through a successful endowment campaign. And while the Cherokee Garden Library has long since outgrown the label “a garden club project” with a broadening array of researchers, program attendees, financial supporters, and Advisory Board members, it has been—and will continue to be—dear to the heart of the Cherokee Garden Club. Unique among garden club civic contributions in the United States, the Cherokee Garden Library serves as a lasting legacy of the Cherokee Garden Club.
The Well-Placed Weed: The Bountiful Life of Ryan Gainey

The Well-Placed Weed: The Bountiful Life of Ryan Gainey is a feature documentary about the life and work of renowned Atlanta gardener Ryan Gainey. One of the most celebrated American garden designers of the past three decades, Ryan was an exceptional gardener and garden designer, brilliant horticulturist, master showman, poet, visionary, and unapologetic original. Growing up in rural South Carolina, he developed a deep love of plants influenced by his relatives and neighbors. After coming to Atlanta in the '70s and opening three beloved garden shops, Ryan began to design gardens around the city and eventually around the world. He died in July 2016 in Lexington, Georgia.

Ryan has been the focus of numerous gardening television programs, but this film is the first project to examine the complexities of his life. As the film shows, he was a contradictory character, both off-putting and tender, self-absorbed and generous, artificial and authentic. Ryan Gainey was a lover of beauty, and his home garden in Decatur, Georgia was his masterpiece. It was, as he often said, a “garden of remembrance” where his old friends and family lived on in the overlapping blooms of heirloom plants.

Steve Bransford, a senior video producer at Emory University and a documentary filmmaker, and Cooper Sanchez, an artist and a gardener at Historic Oakland Cemetery, filmed Gainey between 2010 and 2016. With editing and post-production, The Well-Placed Weed is an eight-year journey, showing their deep passion for the project.

The Cherokee Garden Library is honored to host this significant work about Ryan Gainey’s life. Ryan devoted his time and talent to the library for many years, serving on the library’s board, creating romantic floral experiences for the library’s events, being a celebrated keynote speaker, and donating cherished, rare books, botanical prints, and papers to the library’s collections.
The Original Southern Peanut Grown on the Smith Family Farm

By Emily Roberts, Urban Agriculturist, Gussie’s Gardens

One of the most interesting parts of farming at the Atlanta History Center is getting to research and grow historic varieties of plants that were available in this area in the 1860s—and may not be so readily available or popular these days. Often visitors and colleagues alike will ask me, “What is the coolest thing you grow?” There is no easy answer, but one of the best plant stories I have to tell about our peanuts—the Carolina African runners.

Peanuts (Arachis hypogaea), like many foods now grown and eaten in the South, came to the United States via the transatlantic slave trade. While this lineage originated in South America, Portuguese and Spanish explorers and slave traders carried it to West Africa where it grew very well and remained popular. Of course, in West Africa and elsewhere in the world, they are called “groundnuts” (not peanuts) because of their self-pollination, their stalks grow long and produce “pegs” which push developing seed pods into the soil.

African runners date back to the 1920s, with some farmers in North Carolina continuing into the 1930s. By the 1950s it was thought that the last commercially grown African runner fell out of favor. Just kidding! Actually, Dr. David Shields of the Carolina Gold Rice Foundation found out in 2013 that this peanut (or something like it) was in a seed bank at North Carolina State University. A mere 40 seeds were being held there in cold storage. It did not exist anywhere else at least in the Western Hemisphere. At that time, Dr. Tom Ideh at NC State sent 20 seeds from the seed bank to Dr. Brian Ward, a researcher interested in using a variety of crops concerned with organic agriculture at the Clemson Coastal Research and Education Center in Charleston. Of those 20 seeds, 12 sprouted.

Emily is an Urban Agriculturist for the Gussie’s Gardens, an Atlanta History Center. In that role, she manages the plant life on the Smith Family Farm and uses the gardens as a tool for understanding what life on a slave-holding farm in the 1860s would be like. When not on the dirt, Emily is researching 19th-century foodways and agriculture to inform her growing practices. Emily says she loves the Atlanta History Center because there are so many different ways for people to engage with their past. She especially loves when guests share their vegetable gardening experiences and memories with her when they come to the farm.

From those 12 plants, they harvested approximately 1,200 seeds in the fall of 2013. In 2014 those became 66,000, a million in 2015, 1 million in 2016,... and now there are enough that they are available commercially. We started growing Carolina African runners on the Smith Family Farm in 2017 with great success. This year we have 2½ rows planted in the field on the backside of the farm.

The Carolina African runner is still one of the most interesting parts of farming at the Atlanta History Center because there are so many different ways for people to engage with their past. She especially loves when guests share their vegetable gardening experiences and memories with her when they come to the farm.

REFERENCES

All books available in the Cherokee Gardens Library.


SO, WE’RE GROWING DINOSAUR PEANUTS AT THE SMITH FAMILY FARM.

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Dr. Ward took very special care of those 12 plants and when they matured, he and Dr. Shields compared them to the photo they had from the Sloane Foundation. They shared that the last commercially grown Carolina African runner date back to the 1920s, with some farmers in North Carolina continuing into the 1930s. By the 1960s it was thought that it was extinct.

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THE CHEROKEE GARDEN LIBRARY LECTURE, BOOK, AND EXHIBITION LAUNCH

Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia’s Historic Gardens

On a picturesque spring evening, an audience of over 400 celebrated the launch of the University of Georgia Press book, Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia’s Historic Gardens, by Staci L. Catron and Mary Ann Eaddy with photography by James R. Lockhart, and its corresponding exhibition.

Many thanks to event co-chairs Kinsey Harper and Elizabeth Martin for a sensational and successful event. We share a gracious thank-you to the event committee: Lee Dunn, Maureen Foley, Paula Hennessy, Carolyn Llorens, Fluffy McDuffie, Jane Whitaker, and Ellen Wiley. A special thanks to Louise Gunn and Randy Jones for garnering publicity for the event. Our deepest gratitude to all who joined us for this special evening!

Photography at right by Kathy Nesbit
SEEKING EDEN:
A Collection of Georgia’s Historic Gardens Exhibition

On Display until December 31, 2018
Archives Gallery, McElreath Hall

Many of Georgia’s significant, designed landscapes grew from a strong interest in gardening and garden design that existed in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The exhibition, Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia’s Historic Gardens, explores the evolution of 12 of these influential properties. Through photographs, postcards, landscape plans, and manuscripts, the exhibition highlights the importance of historic gardens in Georgia’s past as well as their value and meaning within the state’s 21st-century communities.

On view in McElreath Hall’s Archives Gallery through December 31, 2018, the exhibition is being presented in conjunction with the publication of the University of Georgia Press book, also titled Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia’s Historic Gardens.

Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia’s Historic Gardens exhibition opened in conjunction with the University of Georgia Press book of the same title with support in part by the following organizations:

THE GARDEN CLUB OF GEORGIA, INC.
Atlanta History Center
Georgia Department of Economic Development
Georgia Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects
The Mildred Fort Foundation

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The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in the State of Georgia, Atlanta Town Committee

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THE CHEROKEE GARDEN LIBRARY LECTURE, BOOK, AND EXHIBITION LAUNCH
The Elegant Mr. Abbott Comes to the Library

By Michael Rose, Chief Mission Officer

At the close of 2017, the Cherokee Garden Library became the home of a landmark, two-volume work—John Abbott’s *The Natural History of the Rarer Lepidopterous of Georgia*—through the generosity of Dr. Carl R. Hartrampf, Jr. in honor of his wife Patricia Crawford Hartrampf.

Born in London in 1751, entomologist and ornithologist John Abbott moved to present-day Burke County, Georgia, in late 1775 and spent nearly sixty-five years documenting the birds and insects of Georgia. Recognized for his “elegant and masterly drawings,” Abbott was highly respected by naturalists, collectors, and scientists of his day. His images and descriptions of moths, butterflies, and insects were used by authors and publishers in America, England, France, and Germany. The first major work on North American insects, Abbott’s *The Natural History of the Rarer Lepidopterous of Georgia*, was published in 1797.

In *The Natural History*, each of the 104 copperplate engravings follows the metamorphic cycle of the species, from larva to adult. Portraying the mature male and female in all plates, the series on butterflies highlights the insects’ outspread wings to display their distinguishing patterns. In addition, Abbott depicted each species with its common food plant, often presenting caterpillars on partially eaten leaves.

Following the publication of *The Natural History*, Abbott continued to supply enthusiasts with his drawings until his death in Bullock County, Georgia, in 1840. Today, the volumes of *The Natural History* are extremely rare. The Kenan Research Center has an incomplete unbound copy, previously donated by the Hartrampfs, that allows us to display individual plates. Now, due to the Hartrampfs’ further generosity, the Cherokee Garden Library holds bound copies of the two-volume first edition.

Other naturalists, as well as ethnographers and cartographers, documented early Georgia and the American Southeast, including William Bartram and André Michaux. The collections of the Kenan Research Center, including the Cherokee Garden Library, have notable holdings in these works illustrating our early natural environment. Like Abbott, these works, drawn from nature, entertain and inform us through art, science, and beauty. Their depictions of the flora, fauna, and insects of our region have left us both a scientific as well as an artistic record of our nature’s past.

*Picture: Right: Sassafras with the Black Swallow-Tail Butterfly from James Edward Smith’s *The Natural History of the Rarer Lepidopterous Insects of Georgia Including their systematic characters, the particulars of their several metamorphoses, and the plants on which they feed, collected from the observations of Mr. John Abbott, many years resident in that country...* London: Printed by T. Bensley, for J. Edwards, 1797. Donated by Dr. Carl R. Hartrampf, Jr. in honor of the work Patricia Crawford Hartrampf to the Cherokee Garden Library, A Library of the Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.*
Real Men Grow Dahlias: Conrad Faust and the Dahlia Society of Georgia

By Jennie Oldfield, Cherokee Garden Library Cataloger and Archivist

Georgia has embraced many garden favorites such as tulips, roses, and camellias, but dahlias’ stout, showy late summer blooms that often reach enormous size made them especially captivating for both men and women. One man, in particular, Conrad Emil Faust, helped make dahlias a popular flower in many Southern gardens and helped establish support for a community of dahlia growers. Faust (1892-1980), an Atlanta native, first caught dahlia fever when his mother-in-law sent him a box of tubers in the early 1920s. Previously unfamiliar with dahlias, Faust’s passion for dahlias grew, eventually making him a nationally known expert in growing, showing, judging, and promoting dahlias.

Early Efforts in Organizing Garden Clubs
Conrad Faust and his wife Elizabeth, “Betty,” were active in establishing early Georgia and Atlanta garden clubs. Conrad Faust helped organize the Dahlia Society of Georgia in 1934, serving as president in 1948. The Society was organized to stimulate interest in dahlias, encourage the amateur grower, and assist growers in maintaining a high standard in varieties for Georgia. The society continues its mission today and is affiliated with the American Dahlia Society (founded in 1905) and the Southern States Dahlia Association (founded in 1946).

Faust became vice president of the American Dahlia Society (ADS) in 1946, continuing in that role for several years and served as director for the Men’s Garden Clubs of America (later known as The Gardeners of America; Men’s Garden Clubs of America). He helped organize the Men’s Garden Club of Atlanta in 1938, the oldest men’s garden club in Atlanta, with the charming logo, “Dig, Plant, and Be Happy.” From 1945 to 1946, Faust was president of the men’s club. He was also a charter member of the Buckhead Men’s Garden Club of Atlanta in 1960. Betty Faust, also a dahlia enthusiast, served as the first president of the Buckhead Men’s Garden Club of Atlanta in 1960 and acted as chairman of the Garden Division of the Fifth District of the Georgia Federation of Women’s Clubs (established in 1896).

Growing Dahlias on Piedmont Road
The Fausts enjoyed gardening on their 2.5-acre property on Piedmont Road until the late 1960s. As Conrad Faust’s enthusiasm for dahlias flourished, his collection grew to over 500 varieties. He became involved with dahlia shows and cultivation methods, developing his own techniques for the healthiest and showiest blooms. Faust was on interview to share his system of soil preparation, winter cover crops, storage, fertilization, and planting tips. In 1958 Faust authored a guidebook, Dahlias, which included images of his cultivation methods. Ever determined, Faust enlisted the help of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to experiment radiating his dahlia seeds in an effort to yield even bigger blooms. Some dahlia varieties offered the potential for dinner-plate size flowers making them an irresistible competitive flower to grow.

Faust cut and shared over 15,000 dahlia blossoms from his garden each year. He installed flood lights so he could continue working into the evening and maintain his garden year-round. The Fausts opened their garden to visitors and hosted events such as the Northside Library Association Annual Tea to raise funds for the Ida Williams Buckhead Library. Their garden dahlias were featured in many Atlanta Journal magazine articles in full-color splendor, showcasing numerous varieties.

Showing and Judging Dahlias
From 1937 to 1956, Faust served as one of four regional Honor Roll Judges sponsored by Flower Grower magazine in cooperation with ADS. He tested new dahlia varieties, picking approximately ten each year to be added to the magazine’s annual National Honor Roll of select dahlias. Faust was avid in his efforts to introduce new varieties and in 1964 he was awarded first prize from ADS for a new medium-sized, dark red dahlia he named “Piedmont Rebel.” He was active in testing new varieties not only in his own garden but also in ADS Trial Gardens set up in various locations across Georgia including the University of Georgia.

Faust helped organize annual dahlia shows for the Dahlia Society of Georgia and competed in numerous shows across the Southeast winning over 2000 ribbons and awards for dahlia specimens and new introductions. Among his many achievements was the Bronze Medal Award from the Men’s Garden Clubs of America. Faust was also recognized by ADS with the Certificate of Merit in 1956 for the trial dahlia “Piedmont Jewel” and in 1970 with the Gold Medal award for his work with dahlias.

The Cherokee Garden Library is honored to serve as the repository for the records of the Dahlia Society of Georgia, the Eugene Boeke Dahlia Archives, American Dahlia Society, the Men’s Garden Club of Atlanta, Inc., and the Buckhead Men’s Garden Club of Atlanta, Inc.

We invite you to learn more about Conrad Faust and the history of dahlias in Georgia through the following collections:

MSS 1063 The Dahlia Society of Georgia, Inc. records
MSS 240 Eugene Boeke Dahlia Archive, American Dahlia Society print collection
MSS 1064 Men’s Garden Club of Atlanta, Inc. records
MSS 1036 Buckhead Men’s Garden Club of Atlanta, Inc. records
MSS 655 Evergreen Garden Club records
MSS 1085 The Dahlia Society of Georgia, Inc. records


REAL MEN GROW DAHLIAS

Faust’s passion for dahlias included an ongoing quest to breed a true blue variety. Although he did not succeed in that goal, he inspired countless men and women to grow and enjoy dahlias. Faust died in 1980 bequeathing funds to the Dahlia Society of Georgia. In 1982, the society created the Dahlia Society of Georgia Trust Fund, a nonprofit organization to help continue Faust’s wishes to propagate dahlias, host dahlia shows and give awards, support the University of Georgia Trial Gardens’ work with new varieties, and establish the Conrad Faust Award for the best second-year seedling. Like Faust, the society continues to inspire gardeners to grow, show, and enjoy dahlias.

REAL MEN GROW DAHLIAS

GROWING DAHLIAS ON PIEDMONT ROAD

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SHARING AND JUDGING DAHLIAS

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MSS 1036 Buckhead Men’s Garden Club of Atlanta, Inc. records
MSS 655 Evergreen Garden Club records
MSS 1085 The Dahlia Society of Georgia, Inc. records

Clermont Lee Garden at Savannah’s Girl Scout Birthplace
Under Threat of Demolition

By Ced Dolder, Historic Preservationist and Cherokee Garden
Library-Acquisitions Committee Secretary

Clermont Lee (1934-2006) was a pioneer in landscape design, especially in the world of recreating gardens in the antebellum style based on historic research. She was a remarkable woman, not just because of her professional acumen, but also for her determination and pioneering spirit. As a working mother, she faced many obstacles, but she succeeded in providing beautiful gardens for the Historic Savannah Foundation and other organizations.

Clermont Lee developed and oversaw the renovation of five of Savannah’s squares, the Antebellum Green-Meldrim House, and the antebellum Green-Meldrim House. She provided oversight and maintenance for the Owens-Thomas House, a historic context report on the built environment, completed for Savannah’s squares: Warren, Washington, Greene, Troup, and Madison. She was instrumental in providing her professional acumen to rapidly-fading landscapes surrounding the historic homes that are now celebrated in Savannah.

While Lee was busy providing era-appropriate gardens for beautiful historic houses, Savannah’s squares were often seen as a remnant of old Savannah, but not really historic. They certainly were not worthy of city funding and even were considered dangerous for locals and visitors after dark. Squares that had existed for over two hundred years were suffering from neglect; they had become jumbles of pathways, playgrounds, deserted wells, utility poles, and chain-link fencing. Wood grew along the curbing and overgrown plantings provided an opportunity for petty crime.

From 1911 to 1972, Clermont Lee developed and oversaw the renovation of five of Savannah’s squares, Warren, Washington, Greene, Troup, and Madison. She teamed up with banker Mills B. Lane, Jr., and frequently battled with city officials to provide the space for green that visitors could stroll through today. For example, one of the problems cited was bus lines and emergency crews petitioning to cut through the squares’ corners so that vehicles could make the turns. Today, Lee’s 50-year-old designs are still evident and should be guarded by city planners and preservationists as assets to the historic context of Savannah.

In 1953, Clermont Lee provided designs and planting plans for the Julie Low Birthplace garden, including maintenance consultation until her death in 2006. The Girl Scouts of the USA acquired the property in 1953 as an interpretative center and house museum, honoring the founder of the Girl Scouts organization, Juliette Gordon Low. The parterre garden at the rear of the house continued to be maintained, but it was deemed appropriate for the era of the Gordon House. This intact 145-year-old beautiful garden is under siege today, with the Girl Scouts of the USA organization planning demolition of the garden space. The GSUSA wants to provide a paved zone for ceremonies for Girl Scouts and visitors access, and no longer sees the need to maintain a formal garden. Despite a rising cloud of debate from the Girl Scouts community, and landscape professionals as well as historians, the New York-based organization is proceeding with these plans. The overwhelming irony is a garden designed by an independent, single woman should serve as a positive example for the Girl Scouts of the USA.

Clermont Lee achieved remarkable success in the face of many obstacles she faced. Again and again, she proved her professional and personal determination and pioneering spirit in her sixty-five-year-long career. She not only made history for women in the landscape profession but also had a lasting impact on the quality of Savannah’s historic landscapes. Her design for the Girl Scouts garden doesn’t deserve demolition; it deserves respect.
Members of the North Georgia Camellia Society (NGCS) joined Cherokee Garden Library Director Staci Catron on Saturday, March 10, 2018, for a tour and viewing of camellia-related treasures in the Kenan Research Center’s Cherokee Garden Library. The local society, founded in 1950, sponsored its 70th annual Atlanta Camellia Show in February at the Atlanta Botanical Garden.

Among the Cherokee Garden Library treasures Society members enjoyed were:

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century rare volumes with hand-colored plates of camellias, including Lorenzo Berlèse’s Iconographie du genre Camellia: Oeuvre de Berlese (1824-1827); Hentz and Adler’s Iconographie du genre Camellia: Oeuvre de Berlese par J. J. Jung (Paris, 1841-43);

William Curtis’s The Botanical Magazine or Flower-Garden Displayed (London, 1787-1800);

American Camellia Society yearbooks, 1946-1993;

Altho Menaboni prints of camellias, 1949;

Claude Herndon’s Camellias of the Old South, 1946;

Atlanta Camellia Society Show programs, 1950s-1970s;

Landscape Drawings (1930) by Hentz, Adler, & Shuite for the Goodrum House on West Paces Ferry Road in Atlanta featuring a camellia house;

Vintage Georgia seed catalogs from Fruitland Nurseries (Augusta) and H.G. Hastings and Company (Atlanta) featuring camellias.

Members of the Society are currently working with Sarah Roberts, Vice President of the Goizueta Gardens and Living Collections at the Atlanta History Center, to restore historically accurate camellias to the gardens at Swan House—important because of architect Philip Shutze’s great fondness for camellias—and to expand the number of Georgia-related camellias to the Center’s grounds, including Olga’s Garden which will open this fall.

The historically appropriate camellias are currently being propagated by Society Vice President Jim Priday using cuttings, air layers, and grafts, where appropriate. The air layers set shortly after the Cherokee Garden Library visit are now being barerooted and planted in pots to support additional root growth. Air layers have been propagated at the American Society Headquarters at Masses, Lone Gardens in Fort Valley, Georgia, Woodlands Garden in Decatur, Georgia, and two other private, Atlanta-area gardens. Air layers usually take a year or two to become established before they are ready to be planted in a garden.

In addition to the camellias being propagated by air layering, a number of antique camellias have been started from cuttings obtained through the generosity of Tom Johnson at Magnolia Gardens in Charleston, and will be planted at the History Center in the future. Another group of camellia scions obtained by permission of the South Carolina Botanical Garden in Clemson were grafted, but very few had successful grafts. In winter 2018, several of the established camellia gardens will be contacted for further grafting material. Likely gardens will be the Norfolk Botanical Garden, Mobile Botanical Gardens, and the South Carolina Botanical Gardens at Clemson.

Several other large camellias have been donated but not yet delivered to the History Center’s Goizueta Gardens, including two species of camellias donated by the American Camellia Society at Masses Lane Gardens. Among the Georgia-related camellias is an air layer of the camellia ‘Deen Day Smith’ donated to the garden by Tommy Alden, current president of the American Camellia Society and owner of County Line Nursery in Byron, Georgia. The NGCS, a nonprofit organization, is devoted to educating gardeners of varying abilities and interests about camellias—Japanese, Reticulatas, and other species—their care, cultivation, and enjoyment. Its meetings offer an opportunity to meet others with expertise and interest in camellias. As a chapter of the American Camellia Society, the NGCS sponsors educational and social activities and promotes the beauty of those beloved Southern garden favorites through camellia shows. The annual Atlanta Camellia Show, held on the third weekend of February, is one of the highlights of the Society’s annual programs, featuring more than 1,000 blooms from growers throughout Georgia and the Southeastern region. In addition to showcasing beautiful antique and more current blooms, the show’s information booth provides insights and advice to the public as well as novice and seasoned camellia growers.

Dedicated to fostering an appreciation for and knowledge of the plants of the genus Camellia, North Georgia Camellia Society meets September through April at the Atlanta Botanical Garden on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 PM. Anyone interested in camellias is invited to attend and to consider membership.
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R. Donation from Park Pride:
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5. Park Views, 9 issues: Spring, Summer, Fall 2017.
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