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Hidden in Plain Sight: The Lasting Legacy of Black Women and Garden Clubs in Virginia

BY ABRALEE

In the Beginning

On April 22, 1932, eighteen representatives from seven garden clubs gathered at Hampton Institute (now Hampton University) and started a revolution. And while garden clubs existed in Virginia well before the 1930s, this was the start of something extraordinary. Realizing the advantages of a statewide organization, the group came together and formed a federation—they called it the Negro Garden Club of Virginia.

The four founders of the organization were a familiar group to each other. There was J.I. Chesson, a well-known educator and civic leader. Then, Dr. William Cooper who was the director of extension and summer study at Hampton Institute. Asa C. Sims, another member of the Hampton faculty, became a legendary horticulturist and floriculturist most recognized for his role as state advisor to the garden clubs. And Ethel Earley Clark, the only woman of the four founders, was a beloved food service worker, community activist, and elected by the delegation as the club’s first president.

Though three of the organization’s founding four members were men, the women’s contributions and presence are not to be understated. Chesson’s wife, Florence, was a respected community leader and member of numerous civic organizations. She was elected the garden club federation’s first vice-president, became a future president of the organization, and one of its most active members in the decades to come. Lakeshore, Sims, who served as the club’s long-time state advisor, credited his wife, Ethel Sims, as a key factor in his lifelong success in horticulture.

Club Achievements

These clubs, led by Black women, held lectures, flowers shows, tours, institutes, discussions, annual conventions, exhibitions, demonstrations, contests, and monthly meetings. They propagated and divided plants, designed landscapes, improved streets, planted trees and shrubs along roadways and at the entrances to new highways in their community. In vacant lots and alleys, weeds were eliminated throughout neighborhoods in the cities. The women organized local beautification campaigns and planted the grounds at post offices, schools, churches, and other public places. Their activism through gardens led to increased voter registration within the community. They documented their work and created yearbooks and scrapbooks. And though competitive, the women cheered each other on along the way, awarding cash prizes, trophies, and ribbons to individual members and clubs. They did it all and then some.

Within a decade, the group began dropping the use of ‘Negro’ and started using the name ‘Virginia State Garden Clubs,’ also later referred to as ‘Federated Garden Clubs’ and ‘Garden Clubs of Virginia.’ The seven charter clubs had also expanded to sixty-five throughout the State of Virginia. Their values included improvement in home and community. Despite the ever-present dark cloud of the Jim Crow era, race relations and white community were also valued. As was joy—recreation and creative self-expression were prioritized by the club if not demanded.

The women went beyond understanding the needs of soil, plants, and insects. Their self-awareness allowed them to understand the needs of people in cities, counties, and rural areas. The club’s growth saw the addition of active Men’s and Junior garden clubs within the Federation. Through their work in landscape gardening, by 1942, fifty communities had raised the standards of living in more than two thousand homes, while garden clubs existed in Virginia well before the 1930s, this was the start of something extraordinary. Realizing the advantages of a statewide organization, the group came together and formed a federation—they called it the Negro Garden Club of Virginia.

When reflecting over the first ten years of the club’s achievement Cooper and Sims wrote: “It is to the everlasting credit of the women who have composed the membership that they have done so much with so little, using not only native shrubs, flowers, and trees for the improvement of planting, but also using other native resources, both human and material, to secure the results they need.”

Official Handbook

In September 1943, The Handbook of the Negro Garden Club of Virginia was distributed among garden club affiliates. It was curated and edited by Dr. H. Hamilton Williams, a Hampton and Cornell University educated horticulturist and the first academic to do a detailed study of Black landscapes. Included in the book’s preface were greetings sent from the White House by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. In its foreword, Williams wrote with enthusiasm, “Imagine having Dr. Alfred C. Hottes, famous garden adviser for Better Homes and Gardens Magazine, walk into our club meeting and speak to us on the work of our junior clubs...Although he will hardly be there in person, his spirit will be there to bring us his message; and so it will be with all the other contributors.”

Other content included articles by noted seedsman David Burpee, president of Burpee-Seed’s. Numerous great authorities in the world of horticulture shared their wisdom alongside the students and faculty of Hampton’s Department of Horticulture. With over one hundred pages of text, the book was written expressly for the club members. The purpose was to read and study articles within the book at club meetings, to swap and share ideas and information.
Through The Years

In 1967, 600 people attended the 35th annual conference, and in 1982 the organization brought it all back home to Hampton's campus to celebrate its golden anniversary of fifty years. The group met regularly through the early aughts of the 2000s, but the story does not end there. On April 22, 2022, the nineteenth anniversary of the founding of the clubs will be celebrated at the iconic Anne Spencer House and Garden Museum in Lynchburg, Virginia. Lovingly called ‘Ethel Day,’ the celebration will highlight the group’s first president Ethel Earley Clark as well as many of the other ordinary women whose extraordinary work in horticulture influenced a nation.

This story does not just speak to the past. It matters for our present and future. May the name Ethel Earley Clark, as well as the women that stood before, beside, and after her, one day be as familiar to plant lovers as that of George Washington Carver.

About Abra Lee:

Abra Lee is an international speaker, writer, and founder of Conquer The Soil, a community that explores the history, folklore, and art of horticulture. She has spent a whole lotta time in the dirt as a municipal arborist and airport landscape manager. Her work has been featured in publications including The New York Times and Veranda Magazine. Lee is a graduate of Auburn University College of Agriculture and an alumna of the Longwood Gardens Society of Fellows, a global network of public horticulture professionals. She is the author of the forthcoming book, Conquer The Soil: Black America and the Untold Stories of Our Country’s Gardeners, Farmers, and Growers (Timber Press, 2023).

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The year 2022 marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted, social reformer and founder of American landscape architecture. As part of the Olmsted 200 national celebration, the Atlanta History Center is pleased to join the National Association for Olmsted Parks, partners, friends, and the public in this effort to explore Olmsted’s living legacy.
Join us, in person, on May 3, 2022, for a Cherokee Garden Library Talk featuring Jennifer J. Richardson and Spencer Tunnell II, authors of Olmsted’s Linear Park (Arcadia Publishing, 2022).

ABOUT OLMSTED’S LINEAR PARK:
In 1892, entrepreneur Joel Hurt invited Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. to Atlanta to design “an ideal suburb.” Olmsted and his firm began designs and were in regular communication with Hurt. Members of the firm came to Atlanta during design and construction. Even with changing ownership, Olmsted’s vision and plans were followed. The design became the last residential suburb designed by Olmsted—the only one in the Deep South. The centerpiece of Druid Hills is its segmented park. After reaching a peak of beauty in the 1930s, the park and neighborhood declined, and the park was threatened by an ill-conceived expressway. Olmsted and Hurt’s dream of the linear park prevailed, and the park has been renovated to how it looked in its heyday. This is the story of how a handful of people preserved, protected, and enhanced the linear park so that it can be enjoyed for generations to come.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:
Jennifer J. Richardson, author and historian, has lived in Druid Hills for 67 years, served on the board of the Olmsted Parks Society of Atlanta, Inc., and serves on the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance (OLPA) Board. Spencer Tunnell II, OLPA and National Association of Olmsted Parks (NAOP) board member, has served as the landscape architect for the rehabilitation of the linear park.
Cherokee Garden Library Acquisitions Committee continues to add books as part of Atlanta History Center’s collecting plan and mission to connect people, culture, and history, to cultivate understanding of our shared history, and to serve, collect, preserve, and engage for inclusive, diverse, and historically underrepresented communities, including Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, the Acquisitions Committee seeks to build a collection that examines land use and gardening traditions of Native American, African American, and Latinx communities in the Southeastern United States.

Here’s a sampling of new books fulfilling that mission:


Author, filmmaker, and food justice advocate Natalie Baszile has assembled a treasury of Black farmers’ stories with *We Are Each Other’s Harvest*. This engaging collection of short essays, poems, and interviews offers the reader an opportunity to learn of the triumphs and adversities African American and Latinx farmers have faced as they continue to battle systemic racism. Included are examples from Black and brown farmers who have managed multigenerational farms that owe their fruition to the labor and knowledge of enslaved people. Contributions from farmers such as Leah Penniman of Soul Fire Farm, New York, and author of *Farming While Black*, and activist and farmer Jim Embrey, Director of Sustainable Communities Network, illustrate the ancestral land connection that African American farmers share and discuss issues such as food justice, African American identity and healing.


Attorney and lead counsel Greg A. Francis guides the reader of *Just Harvest* through the twists and turns of the largest civil rights discrimination case in United States history and the history of African American farmers. Representing over 33,000 African American farmers in the most significant settlement in the history of United States litigation, Francis documents years of racism and discrimination tactics by the United States Department of Agriculture and federal officials against Black farmers and the resulting legal cases of *Pigford v. Glickman* and *Pigford II* from the late 1990s to the 2010s. Francis also examines the history of Reconstruction, sharecropping, and the New Deal to help the reader understand the historical and cultural foundations that led to these pivotal cases.

In 1874, Matthew Raiford's great, great, great grandfather, Jupiter Gilliard and his wife Riner, as freed people, purchased a farm that his family has nurtured and tended over seven generations. Bress 'n' Nyam, a Gullah Geechee term for “bless and eat” is a culmination of old and updated family recipes, gathered and shared on the Gilliard Farms of Brunswick, Georgia. Not just a farm-to-table cookbook, Raiford's book explores the journey of the Gullah Geechee community as descendants of enslaved African Americans and the food that brings them together. Raiford, a self-described “CheFarmer” and a 2018 semifinalist for the James Beard Award for Best Chef, shares heirloom recipes such as Smoked Ossabaw Island Hog, Hot Tin Oysters, Potlikker Goobers, Gullah Fish Stew, and Effie's Brown Sugar Molasses Pound Cake. Raiford helps the reader understand the Gullah Geechee coastal cuisine and culture through traced history, images, and stories.


Unworthy Republic, by University of Georgia historian and author Claudio Saunt, provides a detailed and corrective account of the forced migration of Native Americans across the Mississippi River in the 1830s and the ensuing theft of their land. Saunt weaves together United States policy and political ambition, economic development of early capitalism and greed, along with white supremacy and federal betrayal, to give context to the mass expulsion of over 80,000 Indigenous peoples. Winner of the Bancroft Prize for American History and a finalist for the National Book Award for Nonfiction, this epic account offers new insights into this violent period of fraud, intimidation, and violence in United States history.


In Protecting the Places We Love, conservationist and geospatial designer Breece Robertson leads readers through strategies, processes, and resources to help communities of all sizes identify and gain support to protect land for equitable access and use, and to secure partnerships and funding. Robertson offers insights for preserving natural habitats and parks using maps and geospatial data to analyze land characteristics such as how many people live within walking distance of a park, where land conservation can help connect a gap between green spaces, and how the tree canopy of an area relates to the population and poverty levels. Robertson's book hopes to address social issues through data science by improving land equity and environmental justice.


Through a collection of over eighty images, Reconstructing the Landscapes of Slavery details the history and physical landscapes of the largest and most productive plantations and farms of the Lower Mississippi Valley, Cuba, and Brazil that once produced coffee, sugar, and cotton using enslaved labor. Tomich and his coauthors use photographs, maps, prints, and lithographs to study the role that enslaved labor played in commodity production and show how planters' use of the land maximized crop output while increasing exploitation of enslaved labor, turning these landscapes into mass markets for a growing global economy. This fascinating collection attempts to answer how social, economic, and environmental history can be better understood through visual evidence.

We invite you to explore these books and others in the Cherokee Garden Library of the Kenan Research Center, open by appointment Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 5pm.
At first glance, the Board of Park Commissioners Minute Books for Atlanta may seem ordinary, even inconsequential. These resources, however, hold significant information, reflecting the intersectionality of race, gender, and class in urban spaces during the early 20th century. Minute books are the written record of what is said and done in meetings. Their contents reveal the discussions and decisions of the park commissioners, an all-white, male governmental body, during part of the Jim Crow era.

Minute books of the park commission meetings are now available digitally online for research. The first book ranges from January 1905 to March 1906; the second ranges from April 1919 to the last meeting in 1939. These minute books are part of the records donated by Park Pride (MSS 1158) to the Cherokee Garden Library collection of Kenan Research Center. Park Pride is a nonprofit organization that works with Atlanta communities to improve their parks.

The Atlanta Board of Park Commissioners managed park concessions, maintenance and repairs, budgets and payroll, animal care, visitation, and upkeep of the Cyclorama building at Grant Park. The board also reviewed letters of complaint from the public, set employee salaries and positions, approved applications for special use, and sought land purchases for new parks and park expansion. These tasks highlight social issues, such as segregation, discrimination, land use, income inequality, and social norms.

In 1905, Piedmont Park included the following concessions for whites only: fishing, boating, golf, par supreming, sand, stables, and farming. Grant Park saw the installation of a penny arcade in 1906 for whites only, the same year that armed white mobs attacked Black Atlantans, an event known as the 1906 Atlanta Race Riots.

In July 1920, the board held a discussion of appropriate bathing attire for public pools: “In discussing the costumes worn by ladies, the motion carried that they could go in the pools without stockings if they desired.”

During the second term of Mayor James Lee Key, the minutes from the January 5, 1921, meeting include a discussion about the potential for new parks. That park was the first recreational green space in Atlanta for African Americans, designated as such in 1919.

Mr. Morton, representing the committee that donated Washington Park to the City, spoke in behalf of securing eight additional acres of adjoining land for the improvement of that Park. Mr. Thom urged the necessity of enlarging the acreage and installing the necessary equipments in Washington Park (exclusive negro Park) to meet the demands of the negro populace. Mr. McClatchey moved that the matter be referred to the Improvement Committee to cooperate with Mr. Morton and his committee to secure funds for the purchase of the eight additional acres of land. This motion was adopted.

In 1923, the board of commissioners was replaced by a standing park committee of the Atlanta city council. During a committee discussion about the expansion of the whites-only Candler Park to add a golf course in 1926, committee members considered the acquisition and development of properties owned by African Americans.

Mr. Knight suggested to the Committee that the negro houses located on property adjoining Candler Park be purchased and the land developed. He stated that this would add a great deal to the looks of the park and give enough land to this park for the construction of a golf course, swimming pool or other improvements that the Committee might decide upon.

Minutes of the meeting of the park committee, held April 22, 1924, show the allocation of more city resources to white communities than to Black communities:

Mr. White moved to go into the discussion of music for the parks. This motion was adopted. On motion of Mr. York $3,500.00 of the appropriation made for this purpose will be set aside for music in the white parks of the city and $500 for the music in the colored parks.

Park committee minutes from May 24, 1924, hold information about the election of directors of playgrounds in Atlanta, including 19 white women for the white parks and three “colored directors” for the Black parks, specifically Nellie McHenry, Mattie Norris, and Rachel Thom.

Minutes also include discussion and appraisal of pay rates for employees, showing differences in white versus African American salaries.

In 1923, on motion of Mr. Herman the committee voted to pay a salary of $200.00 per week to all white playground directors and assistants, $100.00 per week to colored directors, and $40.00 per week to the Playground Supervisor; these salaries to be in effect during the 1923 season.

In 1923, He [Mr. Simons] also stated that he had figured the following wage scale on an hourly basis, which would not exceed the appropriation for the operation of the pools: Life Guards - $.25 an hour; Matrons and Turnkeys – $.25 an hour. Colored attendants: Matrons and Turnkeys – $.17 1/2 an hour and Life Guards - $.25 an hour. The Committee approved the part-time schedule for attendants and hourly rate of pay.

The committee also discussed park use that conformed to social norms of the time, which included segregation. For example, the following passage from 1932 illustrates the concern over white and African American children playing together:

Mrs. J. E. Andrews, President of the Atlanta Woman’s Civic Council and the Southside Civic Federation, appealed to the committee to continue the operation of the playgrounds even if it was necessary to do so with volunteer workers, as she stated that there was a movement on foot to throw white and colored children together, and stated further that the women in her organization were willing to furnish help on the grounds, without salaries.

Today, public parks provide shared spaces for Atlantans and others. Historically, those same parks reflect the many social issues facing the communities that used—or were prohibited from using—those spaces. For research in contemporary issues, the Atlanta Park Commissioners Minute Books offer important details of the oversight and use of urban spaces in the Jim Crow era.
The Entrance Gardens are a dramatically different landscape, welcoming guests on foot and by car to the Atlanta History Center.

During 2018-2019, visitors saw cover crops growing in planting beds across from the Lloyd and Mary Ann Whitaker Cyclorama Building, Hollins Gallery, and BRASH Coffee. While those crops improved soil structure and fertility in locations compacted by construction, other areas were renovated and planted in line with a new vision for the Center’s Entrance Gardens.

The design of this new garden was inspired by the New Perennial Movement, an evolution of the Dutch Wave and the New American Garden. Famous examples in the U.S. include the High Line of New York City and the Lurie Garden in Chicago’s Millennium Park. Dutch plantsman Piet Oudolf, a pioneer of the movement, created planting schemes for both of these gardens. The Cherokee Garden Library holds many books by Piet Oudolf and about the New Perennial Movement for the public to explore.

Despite its name, this style is not particularly new but has been successfully moving across Europe and the U.S., primarily in the northern and western regions. This new installation helps bring the movement to the South, on the front porch of Atlanta History Center.

This series of garden spaces is designed to immerse visitors in a thoughtfully curated environment from the minute they enter the property. The Goizueta Gardens experience begins by reconnecting people to nature, with a naturalistic and amplified version of nature, attuned to the ecology of local conditions.

The plant selection and management of this style of garden are rooted in responsible stewardship of the environment. This garden benefits wildlife from the all-important soil microbes to pollinators to birds and mammals seeking shelter and sustenance. Compost created by the Gardens staff was used to amend the soil. The plants selected do not require extra fertilization or other chemical inputs because they are carefully matched to the variety of soil and light conditions in these gardens.

New Perennial Movement gardens also present a different perspective of beauty, contrasting with more traditional Atlanta styles, which include classic boxwood and shade perennials, annual color displays, or mixed border aesthetics.

This garden style features mass plantings of perennials (plants that return year after year), with emphasis on grasses, stemming from the look of American prairies but idealized. Large sweeps of plants weave in and out of each other, intermingling, while others are scattered throughout. Strongly defined clipped evergreen shrubs or deciduous trees are placed within or behind the swirls of perennials and repeated across the entire Entrance Gardens. Plant placement reflects naturally occurring distribution patterns. Given the close proximity of plants to each other, understanding plant sociability is essential because, like people, not all plants make good neighbors. As the garden has been established over the past two years, bare ground is rarely seen outside of the winter months, reducing the growth of unwanted weeds.

Unlike our usual American habit of tidying up gardens, the Entrance Gardens will not be universally cut back in fall. Instead, plants will be left standing all winter as they would in the wild—a good idea for any garden since this helps provide cover for the soil, retains moisture, prevents erosion, and provides habitat for wildlife.

The garden has other distinctive traits. It is a New Perennial Movement garden for the South. The typical New Perennial plant selections had to be refined to accommodate the South’s bewildering assault of intense drought, heavy downpours, wildly fluctuating temperatures, and preponderance of clay soil. As a result, approximately 80% of the 10,000 plants that have been placed in the Entrance Gardens so far are native to Georgia, including uncommon species that deserve wider recognition and use in gardens.

A Modern Landscape for Atlanta History Center

BY SARAH ROBERTS
Olga C. de Goizueta Vice President of Goizueta Gardens and Living Collections

ABOVE: Monarda bradburiana is an underutilized native perennial with early summer blooms, mildew resistance, and red fall color.
Plants that support high numbers of pollinators were researched and used in large quantities to combat the rapid worldwide reduction in pollinator populations. This garden will be buzzing with pollinators—which also means it will attract birds who eat insects and rely on insect larvae for their young. Keep an eye on our website for guided tours by our partner, Georgia Audubon.

As with all our gardening endeavors, the plants within the Entrance Gardens are being accessioned, tagged, and recorded in our Living Collections database. Informative display labels are provided for each unique species in this landscape.

Installation of the original plantings began in November 2019 after the cover crops had done their job rebuilding the soil. Following the success of the initial planting, multiple expansions generously funded by the Goizueta Foundation have allowed the Gardens team to extend the Entrance Gardens in several directions. The sweeping landscape now extends to Veteran’s Park, where it replaced the turf with hundreds of pollinator-attracting perennials. This creates a long, beautiful vista for visitors walking in or enjoying the landscape up front. Shortly afterward, perennials and shrubs were planted along West Paces Ferry Road and surrounding the Tree Table.

Another expansion is currently underway at the very front of the Museum, where there was only an expanse of lawn before. Once again, the turfgrass was removed, and this time replaced with a series of five parallel hedges, clipped in the shape of undulating waves. These hedges serve several purposes. They are evergreen—yayun holly and tea olive—and tie the garden areas on either side of this island bed together, as they all feature evergreen hedges now. They also provide a backdrop to new landmark signage. The new signs will be installed immediately in front of two of the hedges—as silver letters only, with the dark green foliage backdrop to provide contrast. Since we must follow city code for signs, only using letters allows us to maximize the size, and the hedges as backdrop don’t count towards square footage allowance. Finally, the hedges also screen the cars parked immediately in front of the Museum, so the first impression is of the beautiful Museum façade and the modern landscape, not the cars parked in front.

Hundreds of grasses and perennials will be planted in spring, surrounding and softening the clipped hedges. Future expansions of the Entrance Gardens are already in planning— including a picnic area and new sidewalks around the campus perimeter.

The next time you visit Atlanta History Center, we hope you slow down as you progress through the Entrance Gardens on your way into our campus—taking a moment to look around and reconnect with nature in the midst of bustling Buckhead.
During the middle years of the 20th century, Victoria Hutson Huntley (1900–1971) was considered one of America’s leading lithographers. After she took up lithography in 1930, her recognition in that medium was almost immediate. Not only did five leading museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts purchase her lithographs, but her second lithograph *Interior* won the Logan Prize in the International Graphic Art Exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago. Huntley’s 1930s lithographs were well within the American Scene tradition—landscapes, portraits, still lifes, all in a representational style.
Victoria's lithographs changed in 1946 after her second husband took a teaching position at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. At first, Victoria found Florida "a shock to me [as she considered herself] a cold weather person." In time, however, she adjusted to the "intense heat and humidity," and turned her attention to Florida's flora and fauna, especially the birds. During her seven years in that state, she made several trips to the Everglades and crafted several dozen lithographs, many of which became her best-known and popular works.

Writing decades later, Victoria commented that her "Florida experience [was] a happy, busy one, with much success and many professional honors, but apparently . . . I became infected by amoebiasis and [have] suffered from chronic amoebiasis [amebic dysentery]" which remained undiagnosed until shortly before the Huntleys moved to Chicago in 1953. This would flare up from time to time throughout her life.

During her time in Florida, the art world had changed. While Victoria was depicting the natural world of Florida in a realistic style, modernism, specifically abstraction, had become the latest movement in art. After she returned north, Victoria experimented with abstraction. Still, she held onto her representational style, though she adopted a more contemporary style that edged toward abstraction through simplification and magnification. The result was some of her most interesting and enduring works.

In her 60s, Victoria suffered from osteoarthritis in her left hip, which curtailed her work on the lithographic press. She underwent hip surgery in the summer of 1966 and then a first-generation hip replacement near the end of 1969 with what turned out to be disastrous results, which likely contributed to her untimely death.

Her floral prints date from an earlier time in her artistic career. Not long after she took up lithography, she executed her first floral in 1930, which was followed by at least nine others. The Petunia (Petunia x hybrida) with Butterfly was done in 1935; Indian Pipes (Monotropa uniflora), a common plant, usually trees and decaying plant matter. Because it does not photosynthesize, it is able to live in the darkest forests and Huntley appropriately leaves the background for her rendering dark. The plant does flower; she shows buds at the end of the stems.

Near the end of her life, Victoria Huntley reflected on her favorite artistic medium: "Lithography to-day is not a medium popular with contemporary printmakers. . . . None the less, lithography is a great medium and much exploration could be made in it. It is flexible and free and very close to painting."

Following the closing of the exhibition of Huntley's work at the Georgia Museum of Art in 2021, the Cherokee Garden Library became home to the two floral prints mentioned above (Petunias with Butterfly and Indian Pipes), enhancing the Library's botanical print collection and making Huntley's fine work available to researchers for study throughout the year.

Note
All of the quoted material is from the catalogue of an exhibit of Huntley’s works that took place at the Georgia Museum of Art (Athens, Georgia) in 2020; the exhibit catalogue was published as volume 26 (2020) of the Georgia Museum of Art Bulletin; copies are available from the GMOA for $10.

About Stephen Goldfarb, Ph.D.
Stephen Goldfarb was born in Massachusetts; he moved to Austin, Texas, as a child. He earned a B.A. and M.A. in history from the University of Texas, Austin, and a Ph.D. in the history of science and technology from Case Western Reserve University. After teaching for a decade, Goldfarb joined the reference department of the Fulton County Library, from which he is retired. Since retiring, he has curated or co-curated six art exhibits in the United States and one in South Africa. He also writes a book column for the quarterly Alabama Heritage.

Gratitude
The Cherokee Garden Library Advisory Board and staff extend their sincerest gratitude to Dr. Goldfarb for the donation of the two floral prints, Petunias with Butterfly (1935) and Indian Pipes (1946), by Victoria Hutson Huntley, to the collection.
Frustration and uncertainty continued to affect our lives during the second summer of COVID-19. Yet, notwithstanding all the distractions, I had the incredible opportunity to survey and document the Promised Land, a significant historic site in Georgia. As a resident of Madison, Georgia, since childhood, I have been no stranger to the history surrounding rural vernacular architecture and landscapes. The deep appreciation, respect, and love I have for rural Georgia’s diverse landscape history were further enriched when I served as the Cherokee Garden Library Research Fellow, continuing the work of the Georgia Historic Landscape Initiative. Under the leadership of two inspiring mentors, Staci Catron and Cari Goetcheus, it was a privilege to play a small part in the documentation of the Promised Land. The following article is a summary of the history of this fascinating site.

BY KEELI MICHAEL WINDHAM
Cherokee Garden Library Research Fellow, 2021
Having immigrated to America from Ireland with his family in the early nineteenth century, Thomas Maguire (1801-1886) established an economically successful plantation in the Rockbridge community of Gwinnett County in 1828. The plantation, based on an enslaved workforce, was named after the biblical concept of “The Promised Land,” a land flowing with milk and honey. The Promised Land served its community in various ways, operating as a voting precinct in 1834, mercantile from 1834 to 1858, and post office in 1839. After the Civil War, Maguire opened the Promised Land to white travelers and operated the main house as a lodge, charging $5 to $7 for a one-night stay, which may have included a meal if there was food to spare. The Promised Land engaged in progressive agricultural techniques where field rotations, diversified crops, and soil health were at the forefront of its land management. Maguire oversaw the practice of crop rotations, the nourishment and preparation of the soil for intensive farming, and “green manuring.” Green manuring is the practice of companion planting in which legumes and clover grasses were interplanted with a crop. These companion plants go through the process of “fixing” nitrogen into a useable form and then releasing this usable nitrogen back into the soil for the crops to absorb through its roots. Although the science of “green manuring” is understood and commonly practiced today, the process was not fully understood in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the 1820s, African Americans Robert A. Livsey and Morena Preaks Livsey moved to Gwinnett County from Dacula, Georgia. In 1926, they purchased 100 acres of the Promised Land, including the main house. In 2016, Gwinnett County purchased the Promised Land property for $2,500 in savings from Robert Livsey’s career in the railroad industry. At the onset of the Robert and Morena Livsey ownership (1926-1969), the Promised Land property remained a farming operation. But it also became a place that encouraged community relations, fostering fellowship, friendship, and fraternity amongst the Rockbridge community. Robert and Morena Livsey considered their neighbors part of their family, and their doors were always open. The Livseys were a prominent family in the Rockbridge African American community and were known for their inclusiveness, hospitality, and generosity. Morena Livsey was known for her home cooking, often using fruit and vegetables from the farm to make delicious culinary treats, including jams and pies.

About Keeli Michael Windham:
Keeli Michael Windham received a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture from the University of Georgia in 2019. Continuing her education at UGA, Keeli is pursuing a Master of Landscape Architecture with a Certificate in Cultural Landscape Conservation. During her appointment as a graduate assistant for the College of Environmen + Design, Keeli has had the opportunity to work as a consulting horticulturist and budding historic landscape architect on projects involving historic landscape rehabilitation design and heritage plant research. Her thesis research is focused on how wood's blight in historic southern gardens, investigating the management techniques involved with protecting Buxus sp., and the many gardens they are used in to protect them from the devastating disease.

About Georgia Historic Landscape Initiative:
One example of a vital partnership is the Cherokee Garden Library’s work with the Georgia Historic Landscape Initiative (GHLI). Initiated in 2002 under the direction of landscape architect James R. Colman, FASLA, and Susan Hitchcock, National Park Service, a collaboration was forged among the Georgia Historic Preservation Division, Garden Club of Georgia, National Park Service, and Cherokee Garden Library of Atlanta History Center to conduct a statewide inventory of Georgia’s historic gardens—the GHLI. Using the volume Garden History of Georgia, 1733–1933 as a framework, garden club members and Cherokee Garden Library research fellows determined which of the books significant gardens remained, which had been destroyed, and what changes had occurred to those still in existence. This effort was completed in 2018 and resulted in the University of Georgia Press book, Seeking Eden: A Collection of Georgia Historic Gardens by Staci L. Catron and Mary Ann Eaddy with photographs by James R. Lockhart. Upon completion of revisiting all the designed gardens documented in the 1930s throughout Georgia, in 2018, the GHLI began Phase Two of its landscape documentation program focusing on vernacular landscapes. The same year, the University of Georgia, College of Environment + Design, Historic Preservation Program, officially joined the collaboration after assisting with the effort for several years. The documentation collected through GHLI is preserved and made available to the public at Cherokee Garden Library and is frequently used by researchers. In the summer and fall of 2021, the Promised Land was documented for GHLI by library research fellow and University of Georgia graduate student Keeli Windham with a team, including Susan Hitchcock (National Park Service), Cari Goetcheus (UGA), Elaine Bolton (Garden Club of Georgia), and Staci Catron (UGA). The records of the GHLI, MSS 1007, are held at Cherokee Garden Library, Kenan Research Center at Atlanta History Center, and are available for researchers to study.
WELCOME INCOMING ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

BY STACI L. CATRON
Cherokee Garden Library
Director

TAVIA MCCUEAN
Cherokee Garden Library
Nominating Committee Chair
and Past Advisory Board Chair

Each year the Cherokee Garden Library must bid farewell to our retiring Cherokee Garden Library Advisory Board members. We will continue to call on them for assistance and advice as part of the Cherokee Garden Library family. We are sincerely grateful to our Advisory Board members who have generously completed their three-year terms of service. This year, those members are Sharon Cole, Elise Drake, Kinsey Harper, Wright Marshall, Tavia McCuean (who has kindly agreed to continue her service on the Executive Committee), Raymond McIntyre, and Ann Offen. As is our tradition, we honor them and their essential work for the Library by acquiring a significant volume in each person’s name for the collection.

The Cherokee Garden Library Advisory Board Executive Committee includes Melissa Wright, Chair, Laura Draper, Vice-Chair, Betsy Robinson, Secretary, Duncan Beard, Development Chair, and Tavia McCuean, Immediate Past Chair.

Beginning May 4, 2022, we welcome the following incoming class of the Cherokee Garden Library Advisory Board members.

C. Duncan Beard
C. Duncan Beard recently retired from the life insurance business, where he was employed for over 40 years. He was the recipient of MONY’s Man of the Year Award in 1997. He has been a chairperson and member of MONY’s Field Advisory Board. He is an Atlanta Association of Life Underwriters’ Past President and has served on the Board of Directors of AALU. Duncan also belongs to the Atlanta CLU Chapter and is a life member of Life Leaders of Georgia. Duncan has also coached youth baseball and football for decades. Duncan lives in Atlanta with his wife of forty-four years, Ellen. An avid golfer and duck hunter, Duncan also serves as a volunteer and Board member of the Shepherd Center, The Lovett School Board of Trustees, Historic Oakland Foundation, and Presbyterian Homes. He is a volunteer and Elder at Peachtree Presbyterian Church. Duncan has been active in fundraising for the University of Georgia, The Lovett School, Shepherd Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Presbyterian Village, and Peachtree Presbyterian Church. He returns to the Cherokee Garden Library Advisory Board to share his many talents.

Helen Bost
Helen Bost is a native Georgian born and raised in LaGrange, where her parents still live. She graduated from St. Catherine’s School in Richmond, Virginia, in 1993 and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1997 with a B.A. in English. Upon graduation, Helen moved to Atlanta, where she worked in the interior design field for seven years before starting her own firm, Helen Bost Interiors. In 2009, Helen became an associate at Portraits, Inc., and continues to represent portrait artists today in addition to her interior design work. Helen is also a co-author, with her mother, Polly Mattox, of Private Gardens of Georgia (Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 2010). For four years, Helen and her mother enjoyed traveling across Georgia, meeting different people, and visiting a wide array of gardens. Hearing from the gardeners and landscape architects about their visions and their approaches to garden design was both enlightening and inspiring. Helen and her mother have presented their book to numerous garden clubs and other organizations across Georgia and the Southeast. Helen is married to William Bost, whom she met while attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. They have been married for twenty years, and they have two daughters, Heyward and Anne, who attend The Lovett School. Helen and her family are members of St. Anne’s Episcopal Church. She is a member of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America and a new member of the Cherokee Garden Club. With her deep love of nature and gardening, Helen is delighted to serve a second term on the Cherokee Garden Library Advisory Board.

Adelaide Burton
After graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Adelaide Ward Burton completed her M.B.A. at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. Adelaide worked in institutional equity sales, first with Kidder Peabody and later First Boston. In 2000, she opened Forward Interiors, an interior design firm, collaborating with clients to create cohesive, creative, and meaningful spaces. Adelaide is an active member of the Cherokee Garden Club and served as its president from 2013 to 2017. She is a member of the 19th Century History Class in Atlanta, recently serving as the organization’s president from 2019 to 2021. She currently serves on the Atlanta Speech School Board. Adelaide is married to Dale Burton, and they have four children. She returns to the Cherokee Garden Library Advisory Board to share her enthusiasm and many talents.
Jennifer Cruse-Sanders

Jennifer Cruse-Sanders, Ph.D., is the Director of the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2018. The State Botanical Garden is a 313-acre university garden with thirty acres of cultivated gardens and five miles of trails through natural areas. As part of Public Service and Outreach at the University of Georgia in Athens, the garden serves the citizens of Georgia through educational programming, horticultural expertise, display gardens, and conservation programs developed at the Mimsie Lanier Center for Native Plant Studies. Jennifer has an M.S. and Ph.D. in Botany from the University of Georgia, and she completed her B.A. in Biology at Boston University. Until 2017 Jennifer served as the Vice President for Science and Conservation at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. She launched the Center for Southeastern Conservation and helped host the inaugural Southeastern Partners in Plant Conservation meeting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service, and Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Jennifer is the recipient of the 2016 Marsh Award for International Plant Conservation from Botanic Garden Conservation International; the 2016 Carl N. Backer Stewardship Award from the Natural Areas Association; and the 2015 USDA Forest Service, Wings Across the American International Award for Urban Communities in Conservation. Through collaborative partnerships, she has helped to build networks for conservation across the Southeastern U.S. and developed community sustainability programs to establish native plants and pollinator habitats in green spaces.

Richard Harker

Dr. Richard J. W. Harker is the Executive Director of Historic Oakland Foundation at historic Oakland Cemetery, Atlanta, Georgia. Richard has a Ph.D. in History from Georgia State University and a Master's Degree in History from Durham University, England, and also from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. Prior to working at HOF, Richard worked at the Museum of History & Holocaust Education at Kenmore State University and Educational Cultural Exchanges in London, England. Originally from Croydon, England, Richard also serves on the Boards of Civil Bikes and the Friends of Georgia Archives and History. Richard lives in East Atlanta Village with his son, Alfie.

D L Henderson

Dr. D. L. Henderson is a historian, genealogist, preservationist, and author. She has received the Atlanta Urban Design Commission’s Jenny D. Thurston Memorial Award to an Outstanding Preservation Professional, and she has been recognized by the Atlanta City Council for her contribution to the preservation and interpretation of African American history and culture. D. L. is the author of South-View: An African American City of the Dead. She is currently working on an Afrocentric history of Oakland Cemetery. She has also served on the Cherokee Garden Library Acquisitions Committee since 2020.

Claire Reid

Claire Reid is an Atlanta native and graduate of The Westminster Schools. After earning a B.A. in economics from Vanderbilt University, she was awarded a Wattles Fellowship at Lloyd’s of London. During her two years with Lloyd’s, Claire attended the Chelsea Flower Show, an experience that kindled a life-long passion for gardening. Following her return to Atlanta, Claire pursued a corporate career with AT&T, and a ‘side business’ traveling to East Asia to select, import, and retail fine limes and proclives. After marrying her husband George, she devoted her time to raising their two daughters. Over the years, Claire enjoyed serving as PTA President and participating in the National Charity League with her youngest daughter. The highlight was their work in initiating and organizing the development of the ‘Reading Corner,’ located in Eden Village at Atlanta’s City of Refuge. Once an empty nester, Claire built a wedding calligraphy business. Her passion for gardening remains a constant and has been expressed through countless hours devoted to creating and tending to her gardens in Atlanta and North Carolina. Today, Claire and George enjoy spending time with their two grandchildren in Atlanta and eagerly anticipating the arrival of their third grandchild in New York City. Claire is an active member of One Hundred Shares, the Piedmont Garden Club, and her investment club of twenty-five years. She looks forward to serving on the Cherokee Garden Library Advisory Board.

Claire Schwahn

Claire Schwahn began her involvement with the Cherokee Garden Library in the late 1990s as a member of the Cherokee Garden Club when she helped to establish the first internship program at the Garden Library. Claire has remained involved in the Cherokee Garden Library in many capacities over the years. She served as the Cherokee Garden Library Board President from 2013 to 2015, overseeing the successful exhibition, Following in Bartram’s Footsteps, and related programming, as well as playing a vital role in the success of the Garden Library’s endowment campaign. Claire served as Cherokee Garden Club President, 2017 to 2019, and is presently serving as the Zone VIII representative to The Garden Club of America awards Committee. Other organizations benefiting from Claire’s many skills have included the Atlanta Speech School (Guild President), The Westminster Schools, and First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, where she served as ruling Elder. In addition, she is a member of The National Society of the Colonial Dames; Claire and her husband, Frank, have two grown children, Marjorie (and husband, Stuart) in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Frank, Jr., who lives and works in London. They are also the proud grandparents of Blake and Katherine. Claire is an avid gardener and enjoys playing bridge. She returns to serve another term on our Advisory Board, continuing her leadership role at the Garden Library.

Rosa Sumter

Rosa Tarbutton Sumter, a native of Sandersville, Georgia, moved to Atlanta in 1985 to attend Emory University, from which she received a B.A. in History and Art History. Following a one-year post-graduate program in American Art and Antiquities at Sotheby’s New York, Rosa returned to Atlanta. She began a ten-year career in sales and marketing with Norfolk Southern Railway. In serving on the Sandersville Railroad Company Board of Directors, Rosa currently serves as a Trustee for Emory University. She is an active member of Cherokee Garden Club and the Peachtree Road United Methodist Church. She and her husband Neal have two children, Sadie and Fritz. As they grew, Rosa was an active volunteer and held various leadership positions at Trinity School, The Schenck School, Holy Innocents’ Episcopal School, and The Galloway School. Rosa enjoys traveling, reading, and spending time with family and friends.
SPRING GARDEN CITINGS

Chris Wakefield

A native of Cumming, Georgia, Chris Wakefield is the President of The Outdoor Lights, a landscape lighting company headquartered in his hometown. The Outdoor Lights is one of the leading exterior lighting companies in the Southeast. Chris is a skilled designer of landscape lighting for exclusive properties in Georgia, across the country, and the world. His particular brand of artistry and landscape lighting design innovations have changed the face of the industry over the past three decades. Chris, his wife Tracy, and their children live on Lake Lanier in Gainesville, Georgia. He is the proud father of son, Tanner, and daughter, Brelin. He even named one of his lighting creations, “Bre-Tan,” after his children. Chris is a member of the Cumming First United Methodist Church and is called to mentor young men at risk at the Bald Ridge Boys Lodge. Chris is also a national champion barefoot water skier and enjoys kite surfing, mountain biking, CrossFit, and just about any outside activity.

UPDATE TO THE POTENTIALLY PROBLEMATIC COMMON NAMES PROJECT FROM GARDEN CITINGS FALL 2021 ISSUE

BY JENNIE OLDFIELD
Cherokee Garden Library Librarian/Archivist

The Potentially Problematic Common Names Project was an effort initiated by the Plant Nomenclature and Taxonomy (PNT) Community of the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) to identify the troublesome common plant names and provide institutions, plant record managers, and horticulturists with a resource of alternative plant name choices. Additionally, this project hopes to encourage discussions concerning plant names that might need review in their usage.

As an update to the collaborative project to identify and research problematic common plant names, the American Public Gardens Association Plant Nomenclature and Taxonomy team’s research and results have been finalized and are available on the American Public Gardens Association website. Three resources, Potentially Problematic Common Names in North American Public Gardens Project Report; Cultural Context Resources Document; and Data Resources Spreadsheet, are now available for download for plant record managers and horticulturists to use to assist in making thoughtful choices for common plant names usage at public gardens throughout the United States.
The Cherokee Garden Library thanks its generous sponsors and patrons of the Cherokee Garden Library Talk on April 6th, featuring Rolf Diamant, author of *Olmsted and Yosemite: Civil War, Abolition, and the National Park Idea*.

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To make a gift to any of the funds, please make your check payable to “Atlanta History Center,” and send with a note indicating which fund you have selected (Anne Coppage Carr Research and Director’s Endowment Fund, Ashley Wright McIntyre Education and Programming Endowment Fund, Carter Hayward Morris Acquisitions Endowment Fund, or Louise Staton Gunn Conservation Endowment Fund). Please mail checks to Cherokee Garden Library, Atlanta History Center, PO Box 117478, Atlanta, GA 30368-7478. Every gift in any amount will make a tremendous difference in the future of the Cherokee Garden Library. Your gift may be made in honor or in memory of a beloved family member or friend. Acknowledgments will be sent promptly. If you have any questions, please contact Staci Catron at 404.814.4046 or SCatron@AtlantaHistoryCenter.com. You may also make your gift online at atlantahistorycenter.com/Support-CGL and call Staci to share the specifics regarding your contribution.

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THIS PAGE: Callicarpa americana in the Smith Farm Gardens, Goizueta Gardens at the Atlanta History Center. Photograph by Alexander Lamar.
In addition to purchases throughout the year, the Cherokee Garden Library relies on the kindness of book, periodical, manuscript, and visual arts donors to strengthen its collections. It is a generous deed for a donor, whether an individual at 404.814.4046. This listing includes collection donors who gave between August 28, 2021, and March 1, 2022, and signed a formal Deed of Gift. Thank you for your generosity.

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1. Landscape notebook containing design by Edith Henderson, FASLA, for residence of 3416 Summertree Trce, SAV, Martha's Island, GA, 03/05/79, July 1979.
2. Landscape notebook containing design by Edith Henderson, FASLA, for residence of 3416 Summertree Trce, SAV, Martha's Island, GA, 03/05/79, September 1979 (modifications).

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8. The Garden Club of America Zone VIII Meeting Photo Album, Atlanta, Georgia, 2010.

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SPRING GARDEN CITINGS 2022

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S. Donation from Gary L. Pack, M.D.:
To be added to existing MSS 988, Seed and Nursery Catalogue collection:
1. Inter-State Nurseries. Inter-State Nurseries Catalog, Hamburg, Ia: Inter-State Nurseries, circa 1960s.

T. Donation from Calista Porter:
“Georgia Wild Flowers – Know Them – Use Them – Save Them,” publication for a 1940 Dogwood Festival Attraction at the Farmer’s Market of Sears, Roebuck and Company, Atlanta, Georgia.

U. Donation from Mary Shannon Rash-Flower:

X. Donation from Margaret Shields:
To be added to its existing photographic collection: