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The Gardener's

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A Little of Reynolda For Your Home: The Many Tastes of Basil

by **Michelle Hawks**, *RGWFU horticulturist*

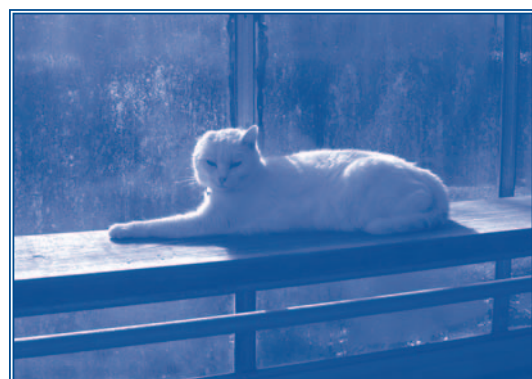
What do you think of when you imagine basil? The scent of a summer herb garden filling the air? The taste of a nice pesto on a cool evening? Bees rushing around from tiny flower to tiny flower? Or maybe it's the different textures, sizes, shapes, and tastes that spring to mind when you ponder the dozens of available varieties of basil. Yes, seriously, there are dozens of varieties of basil, including 'Cinnamon'; 'Lettuce Leaf', which has large leaves; and purple leaf varieties. Today, we're only focusing on my favorite types of basil, due to their flavor and growth habit. Each variety can uniquely enrich not only the flavor of your cooking but also the look of your garden.

How to Grow Basil

Despite the variation in flavor and appearance, the different types of basil are similar and easy to care for. Basil is an annual and is easily grown from seed started indoors in the spring. It is not frost tolerant at all, so be sure to wait to plant outside until after the soil has warmed completely. Place where it will receive full sun. It does need more moisture than some herbs, so be sure to keep it watered, especially when it is grown in pots.

I like to grow basil in pots near the kitchen door. There is nothing better than walking out

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Millie, the Garden Cat

by **Diane Wise**, *RGWFU head horticulturist*

It is very common for public gardens to have cats. The cat is a natural for helping to keep the rodent population under control, so they cannot destroy the beds. Longwood Gardens, the renowned garden near Philadelphia, actually maintains a staff of cats as a patrol to help keep the garden free of mice, voles, and other small creatures, which can do far worse damage to an area than the cats can. Closer to home, both the North Carolina State Arboretum in Raleigh and the North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill are policed by cats. In fact, the Arboretum has posted a sign that states "The cats live here," so that well-meaning people will not think the cats have been abandoned and take them home. The Botanical Garden has even established a fund to accept donations for their cats' food and veterinary care. In addition, a number of world famous gardens such as Boboli Gardens in Florence, Italy; Kew Gardens, the Royal Botanic Garden in

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The Many Tastes of Basil

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and snipping basil for a dish or some good, sweet iced tea. I have found it easy to grow basil in a container, where moisture levels can be easily monitored. Although they need a lot of water, the plants must not become waterlogged; allowing the soil to dry out between watering helps greatly. Basil has shallow roots, and placing it in a shallow pot allows the roots to reach out in a more natural manner and also to stay warm, something which is essential for basil to grow strong and healthy. In late summer start a few seeds in pots. Bring them inside and set them in a very bright and sunny window for the winter.

I personally think if you can only grow three plants it should be tomatoes, onions, and a pot of basil. With these three plants and a few basic pantry items you can treat yourself to a gourmet feast. Some of my favorite basil varieties to grow are Mrs. Burns Lemon, Columnar, Spicy Bush, and Italian Large Leaf.

Ocimum x citriodorum Mrs. Burns, Mrs. Burns Lemon

Mrs. Burns Lemon is a delightful heirloom saved for generations for its scrumptious taste and fragrance. It has a robust, carefree nature in the garden and bigger leaves than any other lemon basil variety. Chop or crush the foliage to release the perfume of basil. Add to rice dishes, poultry, fish, potatoes, and vegetables; use it in dressings and marinades; or, my favorite, enjoy using its leaves for refreshing lemon-flavored iced tea. Here is one of my favorite recipes for lemon basil.

Lemon Pork

12-ounce can frozen lemonade, thawed
1/2 cup fresh basil leaves, cut into thin strips
4 tbs olive oil
salt and pepper
4 boneless pork chops

Mix the first four ingredients. Reserve one-fourth cup of the marinade for basting. Pour the remainder of the marinade over the pork and refrigerate one to two hours, turning once in the process.

Grill for twenty minutes. Turn the meat often, brushing a small amount of the reserved marinade on each time. You can also cut the pork into cubes and make kabobs, alternating with onion and green peppers.



COLUMNAR BASIL

O. basilicum Lesbos, Columnar

Columnar basil has a lovely, upright growth habit; glossy leaves; and the most beautiful, intense basil flavor. It does not have an early blooming habit that must be kept under control, but it grows fast; keeping it snipped back will prevent excessive legginess. It is good with beans, cabbage, salads, Italian dishes, sauces, soups, and oils. A very easy way to use this type of basil is the following recipe:

Basil Pesto

1 cup fresh basil
1/2 cup fresh flat leaf parsley, chopped
1/2 cup olive oil
6 tbs Romano cheese, grated
6 tbs parmesan cheese, grated
1/2 cup pine nuts

Add all the ingredients to a blender or food processor and process until just chopped and combined. Cover and keep refrigerated until ready to use. Great as a dip with toasted Italian bread, mixed with cooked pasta, as a salad dressing, or as a marinade for fish or chicken.

O. b. Minimum, Spicy Bush

These are short, dome-shaped plants with tiny leaves that can be one-half to one inch long. There is a lot of hot, spicy, sweet basil flavor in these wonderful little leaves. These cuties can be grown in pots or in the border of your herb garden. Try this recipe using Spicy Bush basil.

Basil Chicken Salad

- 1 cup cooked chicken breast, diced
- 1/2 cup red grapes, halved
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise (I prefer Hellmann's.)
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped
- 2 tbs sweet onion, chopped
- 1/4 tsp black pepper

Combine all ingredients and chill.

O. b. Italian Large Leaf

This basil has a sweeter tasting, less clove-like pungency; some actually prefer it over any other varieties. The leaves are real whoppers at four inches, and the plant is heavily endowed with leaves. Both fresh and dried leaves are used in seasoning meat, poultry, fish, and many salads. If you like bread and basil, you'll love using Italian Large Leaf in this next recipe.

Basil and Bread Salad

- 1 loaf Italian or French bread
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 3 large tomatoes, chopped
- 1 large green pepper, chopped
- 1 pound fresh mozzarella cheese, diced
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 12 romaine lettuce leaves
- garlic, to taste, minced

Cut bread into cubes and place in a large bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Pour dressing over bread and toss to mix well. Add tomatoes, green pepper, mozzarella cheese, garlic, and basil. Mix gently. Arrange romaine leaves on a serving platter and spoon salad over leaves.

You can substitute any other fresh basil for these recipes. Try different kinds to see what you like. My best suggestion would be to get as many varieties as you can and experiment with the different flavors by adding the fresh leaves to your cooking. After all, when you cook with herbs you've raised yourself, it always gives you a new appreciation of your food. I will leave you with one simple recipe using basil.

Basil Butter

- 1 stick butter, softened
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- pepper to taste
- 1 tbs fresh basil, finely chopped
- 2 tbs fresh parsley, minced

Cream butter and beat in lemon juice. Mash in basil and season with salt and pepper. Place bowl in refrigerator to firm butter. For a nice, simple appetizer, use room-temperature butter on grilled pieces of French bread.

It is apparent that basil is a "much happening" herb. It is so versatile in its garden growth habit, as well as flavor variations. It's hard to find another plant that offers so much variety within the same species as basil. Remember to go herb shopping early to get the best selections. We will offer all of the varieties discussed in this article at our April plant sale at Reynolda Gardens, but we'll also offer other types of basil, as well as a vast selection of other culinary herbs. We'll look forward to seeing you this spring. 🌿



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A Story in a Name: Plant Names Can Help or Hinder Their Identification

by David Bare, RGWFU greenhouse manager

To the uninitiated, botanical jargon can be a bit intimidating. I remember when the need to identify a plant with the proper name first arose. I felt like most of what I knew was no longer valid, and that those who spoke the language were members of an exclusive club I wasn't allowed in. Since that time I've learned not only that botanical Latin is a necessary part of proper identification but also that the nomenclature of plants can be the starting point on a long journey through science and culture. The scientific name of a plant can be a simple description of the plant's qualities, or it may honor the plant's discoverer. It may indicate where the plant is found, a medicinal property, or allude to the plant's resemblance to something else, a shoe for instance. It may also honor some ancient mythological figure.

Descriptive Names

A brief tour in and around the greenhouse reveals the many forks in the road a plant's botanical name can take. Most commonly, a plant's name will be a compact description of itself. A few of the *Lithops* we have growing in the succulent col-



LITHOPS

lection illustrate this. *Lithops* is from the Greek lithos, stone and ops, appearance. These fat little dollops look like pebbles in their native habitat, the stony South African desert. *L. karasmontana* is from the Karasberg Mountains. *L. olivacea* is olive-colored. *L. optica* has a translucent "window" on the leaf surface.

Another plant in the succulent collection is *Pachyphytum*, meaning thick (pachys) plant (phyton). It has swollen, jellybean-like leaves. A more familiar plant of this derivation is *Pachysandra*, meaning thick (pachys) male (andros). This is a reference to the thick stamens, the male portion of the flower. You may also be familiar with *Pachyderm*, the term for elephant, meaning thick skin. My favorite plant name in this category is *Pachystachys*. Stachys means spike. The *Pachystachys* in the greenhouse has long terminal spikes of yellow bracts from which white tubular flowers spring. Its popular name is lollipop plant, but *Pachystachys* is a lot more fun to say. *Philodendron* are familiar vining plants of tropical forests. To find them, you would look up in the trees. The translation is phileo, to love and dendron, a tree. Not all plant names are as descriptive as these, and a few seem a bit mysterious.

The delicate fronds of the maidenhair fern create a green froth in the fern collection. Their fine leaves on wire-thin rachis are often a temptation to visitors in the sales area at Reynolda Gardens. We try to warn customers that, though they are beautiful, the maidenhair ferns thrive on moisture and humidity and quickly succumb should a watering be neglected. Despite this, the botanical name for these plants, *Adiantum*, is from the Greek meaning unwetted. Why? If you have ever watered a maidenhair from overhead, it quickly becomes clear. The leaves shed water like the back of a duck. Perhaps this is an adaptation to deliver more water to the roots.

Above the maidenhair ferns in the conservatory, staghorn ferns are suspended from hanging pots and mounted on wood blocks. These natives of Madagascar, South America, Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Guinea grow as epiphytes in tropical forests. The botanical name of *Platynerium* is applied to the genus. It comes from the Greek platys, meaning broad or flat and keras, meaning a horn, an apt description of the antler-like fronds. We have three species in the genus *Platynerium* in the greenhouse. *P. bifurcatum*, meaning forked into two, *P. superbum*, which means superb, as one might expect, and *P. veitchii*.

Honorary Names

One of the staghorn ferns, *P. veitchii* honors the Veitch family, a famed group of English nurserymen who introduced hundreds of valuable plants to horticulture. Before the First World War, the Veitch family had introduced 118 exotic ferns to cultivation as well as 232 orchids.

John Veitch began his nursery in 1808, employing family members and expanding the nursery to supply everything from exotics to fruit trees. Probably the best-known nursery in the world in its day, the Veitch firm not only introduced the gardening public to new botanical discoveries, it funded expeditions to find them. Veitch employed the Lobb brothers, E. H. Wilson, F. W. Burbidge, and Charles Curtis. Wilson, who worked in China in the early 1900s, is credited with the discovery of *Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis*, the Kousa dogwood, a common street tree here in Winston-Salem, as well as the rediscovery of the lost dove tree, *Davidia involucreata*. William Lobb was sent by the Veitch firm to South America as their first plant collector. Lobb found many plants on his expeditions. Particularly of note is the monkey puzzle tree, *Auricularia imbricata*. His North American explorations yielded the first giant redwoods in cultivation.

Veitch sent William's brother Thomas to the East Indies. He covered Burma, Malaysia, Assam, and Northeast India. He introduced many new orchid species into cultivation, including several *Phalaenopsis* and *Vanda* species. Another orchid in the greenhouse, the golden-colored *Bulbophyllum lobbii* is named in honor of Thomas Lobb, as is the variety of Japanese cedar tree, *Cryptomeria japonica lobbii* planted in the formal gardens.

Two *Paphiopedilum* orchids blooming simultaneously in the greenhouse are associated with collectors in the Himalayas. *Paphiopedilum* is derived from Paphos, the site of a Greek temple on Cyprus where Venus was worshipped and pedilon, a slipper. At the time of their discovery in the mid-1800s, these two were classified as *Cypripedium*. The two names mean essentially the same thing—Venus slipper. *P. spicerianum* was



PAPHIOPEDILUM

discovered by a tea planter in Assam named Spicer and sold to a German plant hunter. In those days it was the practice of collectors to collect what they could and destroy the remains to prevent others from coming behind them and cashing in on their spot. Undoubtedly, this contributed to the rarity of these already rare plants. *P. fairreanum* was named for Mr. Farrie of Liverpool, who bought it at a sale of plants from Assam. It flowered three years later and was exhibited at a Royal Horticultural Society show. Soon after, the plant perished and could not be found again in its native range. A one thousand pound reward was issued for its rediscovery, but the "lost orchid" proved illusive until 1904, when it was found by surveyors on the Bhutan-Sikkim border.

Place Names and Other Puzzles

Sometimes it helps to already know your way around plant names to figure out the new ones you encounter. Thus the orchid *Eriopsis* means like an *Eria*, which is another orchid. *Scabiosaefolius* means like a *Scabiosa*, the pincushion flower of gardens, and *Plumbaginoides* means like a *plumbago*.

It would seem that a name denoting a location would be useful, but often a plant is discovered one place and winds up having a much wider distribution. It also helps to know your geography. You might guess what *philadelphicus* and *virginiana* mean, but *socotranus* (Socotra, an island territory of Yemen in the Indian ocean) or *ikariae* (of the small Greek island Nikaria or Ikaria) do not spring as readily to mind.

Then there are those names that even a seasoned botanist would be challenged to glean much information from. *Impudicus* means shameful, lewd, or impudent. I have not encountered any impudent plants yet. *Psittacinus* indicates colored like a parrot, which could be green, but then it could be a number of other colors as well. *Bufonius* may mean growing in damp places, but literally it means having to do with toads. *Funerbris* means funereal or of graveyards. And finally there is *flos-cuculi* meaning flowering when the cuckoo sings, a definitive characteristic if ever there was one. 🐣

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Planting Trees for the Future

by **John Kiger**, RGWFU assistant manager

“Trees? Why are you planting more trees?”

This is a question I hear quite often while at work on the Reynolda estate. Yes, all you have to do is look around, and you'll see trees that in all aspects appear to be healthy. I suppose to the untrained and yes, I'll admit it, to the professionally trained eye, all appears well, but if we examine them closely, we can find out otherwise. Generally, there are signs that a tree is struggling, such as being slow to leaf out in the spring or dropping leaves too soon. Often, Mother Nature, through her many vagaries of weather, helps us to spot the signs of aging or insect infested trees by causing trees to drop limbs that we can inspect.

In order to preserve the ambiance of the estate, replacement trees must be planted so that future generations will be able to enjoy the atmosphere. Of course, we still have to decide what varieties to plant. The following are a few examples of trees that were chosen for this year's plantings around Reynolda Village.

Zelkova serrata Green Vase, Japanese Zelkova

Hailed as a replacement tree for the American elm due to its resistance to the Dutch elm disease and the elm-leaf beetle, this deciduous, fast-growing, vase-shaped tree reaches a height of sixty to eighty feet with a spread of fifty to sixty feet. Hardy in zones 5 to 9, it does best in full sun and is extremely adaptable to most soil conditions, including areas that occasionally remain wet for extended periods. The foliage can be described as a simple, oblong leaf with serrated edges. Flowers are insignificant. Its greatest show comes in autumn, when the dark green leaves turn to a showy reddish copper.

Cercis reniformis Oklahoma, Oklahoma Redbud

Native to southwestern North America, this deciduous, ornamental tree reaches a height of twenty to twenty-five feet and achieves a spread of fifteen to twenty feet. Considered a medium height tree, this rapid grower requires some pruning in the early stages of its life to promote an upright form. The most prominent feature of this tree is its abundance of pink to red flowers that appear on the limbs of the tree in early spring. As the season moves forward and the flowers fade, glossy green leaves appear. The leaves are simple with an entire leaf margin and are somewhat heart-shaped. Autumn brings the leaves to life with a rich yellow color, which is extremely showy. As leaves begin to fall, the five-inch long, purple seedpods take their place to add continued color for winter interest. Hardy in zones 6 to 9, this tree adds beauty to any landscape. Whether using for naturalizing an area or as a specimen, this one is definitely a three-season tree.



Cladrastis lutea, Yellowwood

This is an attractive tree with a spreading crown, with branches that tend to droop downward. Hardy in zones 4 to 8, the deciduous yellowwood reaches a height of thirty to forty-five feet and can achieve a width greater than its height. The leaf structure is composed of a compound leaf with seven to nine leaflets. At first glance, it looks very similar to a golden rain tree, which is one of my favorites. Early summer brings forth pendulous panicles of fragrant, white flowers, which have been noted to attract birds. It's considered not too picky when it comes to planting conditions; however, it does have its weakness. Considered a soft-wood tree, it is prone to wind and ice damage. Even so, this one still has its place in the landscape.

Oxydendrum arboretum, Sourwood

This is another of my favorites. This southeastern native can reach a height of sixty feet with a less considerable spread of approximately twenty-five to thirty feet. This tree has a graceful habit. The six inch long, elliptical, glossy green leaves seem to hang in a layered fashion. In its native surroundings, it can easily become encompassed by larger trees with dense growth; however, this one seems to shoulder its way to the front as if to say, "Excuse me, I'm about to start my show." Borne on drooping racemes or stalks, white, urn-shaped flowers, loved by honeybees, appear in midsummer. This is quite a joy, since most trees produce their flowers in early spring. Although often overlooked in the landscape, even while in flower, there is no mistaking the bright red leaves when autumn arrives. Grown in zones 5 through 9, this deciduous tree is tolerant of most any soil condition and can be used as a specimen or planted in groups. Care should be taken to avoid planting in heavy growth areas so that its elegance and gracefulness may be admired.



SOURWOOD BLOOMS IN MIDSUMMER.



A FEW OF THE EIGHTY TREES READY FOR PLANTING.

All of the trees mentioned above are in keeping with the historical aspect of the Reynolda estate. It is one of my responsibilities at Reynolda to ensure that future generations know the area as we do today. Just think, in thirty years one of my grandchildren may be sitting in the shade under one of the trees I planted, sharing an ice cream cone with a loved one, planning a future of their own. 🌳

See page 12 for a list of trees originally planted at Reynolda.

Volunteers

Assisted with educational programs, sales, and garden maintenance 2004-05

- Marti Adler
- Stephanie Barbour
- Sarah Bare
- Barry Blevins
- Ken Brian
- Barbara Bryant
- Hanna Cheek
- Jean Dixon
- Forsyth County Master Gardeners
- Janet Frekko
- Aidan Ganzert
- Stephen Greer
- Janet Hano
- Mary Ruth Howard
- Beatrix Hutton
- Emily Jeske
- Billye Keith Jones
- Susan Jones
- Pat Lackey
- Michael Lanahan
- Don Lanning
- Cathy Loveless
- Alice Martin
- Kay McKnight
- Cat McSwain
- Ellen Mincer
- Nancy Moltman
- Deanna Moss
- Mary Newman
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- Amy Verner
- Jo Walker
- Becky Wheeler
- Jean Whitt
- Charlie Williams
- Emily Herring Wilson
- Winston-Salem Rose Society
- Bill Wise
- JoAnn Yates

Thomas Sears and the Trees of Reynolda

by **Camilla Wilcox**, *RGWFLU curator of education*

*T*wo oak trees near the Boathouse died last summer. One succumbed without warning, like so many oaks around the city in the past few years. It was an important tree historically, planted about the time the lake was completed in 1912. A great presence at the entrance to the nature trail, it will be missed. The other one, tucked away next to the Boathouse, died limb by limb over a period of years. Finally, it began to lean ominously over the building. It has been removed, ending a life spanning at least 130 years and leaving only a massive stump to remind us of its place. Many of those passing by will hardly notice its absence; bush honeysuckles and the English ivy planted long ago nearby have already begun to cover its remains.

As early as 1910, the landscape engineering firm Buckenham and Miller, which was responsible for the initial plans for the estate, stressed preservation of existing trees and woodlands. By the time Harvard-educated landscape architect Thomas W. Sears began his work at Reynolda a few years later, construction was well underway, and the previously protected wooded areas were still intact. Roads had been laid out; work had begun on the large formal garden and golf links; several buildings had been sited or built; and the new lake was full. The Buckenham and Miller design had functioned well, but the property was not yet beautiful in the way it would come to be under Mr. Sears' guidance. Within a very few years, this remarkable landscape architect transformed a collection of farms into an estate. The addition of interesting, carefully placed trees was a vital part of his strategy for unifying and beautifying the land.

Aside from the sheer numbers of trees that Mr. Sears specified on his plans, the range of choices reflected an outstanding knowledge of trees. Having studied at Arnold Arboretum, which is associated with Harvard, he had observed both native and exotic trees in a variety of settings and learned about their characteristics at various stages of life. He, like the other students in the landscape architecture program, also studied and observed landscapes throughout America, Asia, and Europe, either in person or through photographs, in order to learn how trees grow in nature and how to use them in the designed landscape. Through these intensive studies and later work on his own, Mr. Sears became skilled at using new plantings to frame or highlight views; placing individual trees as focal

points; preserving existing stands of trees and enhancing them with natural looking underplantings; creating natural looking groves; bringing native trees into prominence; and adding curious exotics for an interesting and exciting balance. He used all of these skills at Reynolda.

Tree Preservation and Enhancement of Natural Woodlands

With few naturally wooded regions at the heart of the estate, existing trees were carefully preserved wherever possible. Most of the wooded area was dominated by "old field pines," which spring up when farm fields are abandoned. Two examples of Mr. Sears' approach to tree preservation illustrate his appreciation for existing trees.

The first is the design around a structure initially called the "Irrigation Pool," which was located at the base of the hill to the east of the residence. Designed for holding water to be used for irrigating plantings near the residence, its name and function were changed in the late 1910s, when Mr. Sears named it the "Freshwater Swimming Pool" on a new plan. He documented every existing tree nearby. In addition to a multitude of pines, he mapped the locations of tulip, sassafras, black gum, cedar, alder, and sourwood trees. Then he drew a "foliage line" on the plan around the immediate area of the basin and drew a variety of flowering shrubs and groundcovers within it. According to marks made on this plan by the forester, only one tree was to be removed: a tulip tree that was located at the water intake. As we can see from this photograph, the natural look of the forest was maintained but subtly beautified by plants that looked as though they could have grown there naturally.

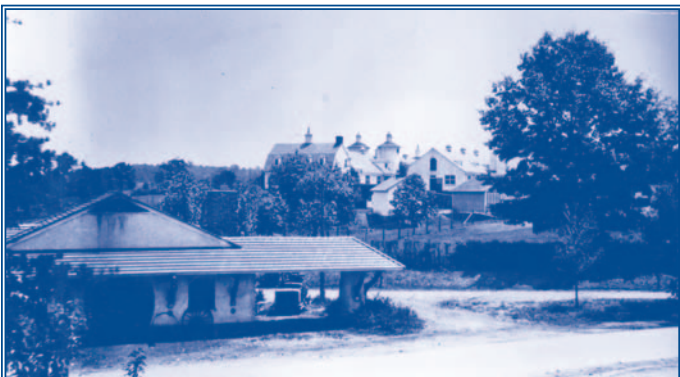




A second example, with a very different appearance, is also shown here. This woodland, located at the curve of the driveway near the entrance of the estate, was one of only a few places where hardwood trees had already grown to maturity when planning began. Here, the woodland floor was kept clear of undergrowth, creating the feeling of an open forest, similar to that of the great “parks” of European estates.

Groves

In these examples, woodlands already existed. Mr. Sears used a subtle landscape design device, the artificial grove, to great effect at various locations where woodlands did not previously exist. Imagine one small pocket of Reynolda, as Thomas Sears saw it in 1921. The concrete highway now known as Reynolda Road curves right in front of the blacksmith’s shop. Nearby, Silas Creek meanders through rich, damp bottomland. A power plant has been constructed on the other side of a grove of old pecan trees, but the land around it is mostly bare. This is a place that could be passed by, seen as simply a service area, but Mr. Sears had learned to see the potential in such places. The plan he drew for this region preserved the pecan trees and inserted red- and yellow-bark willows that would thrive in the rich, wet soil. Tulip trees and several varieties of oak, underplanted with graceful flowering shrubs and groundcovers, completed the scene.



Each grove had its own character. Some were prominently placed and easily distinguished from the land around them, like the grove of native trees planted at the edge of the meadow beside the main driveway. Near the Boathouse, the two large oaks that recently died were preserved, along with several smaller trees; then a few more trees were planted there as well. A cluster of trees was planted where the lake road passed the base of a hilly meadow, and dozens of small, spring blooming trees were planted in a woodlot beside the residence. To see the groves today—and most still exist, even if diminished—one would think that they had arisen naturally. Indeed, this was an important concept within the Harvard group. The Hubbard and Kimball text* often quoted in these pages describes the process of re-creating natural scenes.

The springing up of young trees from wind-blown seeds of a parent tree, the transportation of fruits by birds, of nuts by squirrels, to shrubberies or woods to be concealed or eaten in safety, the tolerance of certain species of plants for the shade of others, the similarity in soil requirements of certain plants...tend to make certain groupings of plants repeat themselves in natural landscape. ... (W)hat the good designer really uses in his work is a feeling for congruities and incongruities of natural plant arrangement acquired through long experience, and amounting in effect to an instinct rather than to a number of reasons to be stated in words.

Planting at the Residence

Compared to other groupings of trees that looked as though they appeared naturally, the grove-like planting at the entrance to the residence is unique. A model for tree selection and placement at the entrance to a large country home was described in great detail in the Hubbard and Kimball text. It framed the house, yet screened the driveway from it; the gentle rise of the driveway to the house through the trees was a last, dramatic effect for those approaching it. Stately cedar of Lebanon, deodara cedar, evergreen and deciduous oaks, five species of magnolia, the exotic princess and Japanese varnish trees, and native red cedar combined to provide interest through the year and from all viewpoints, both from afar and nearby. The conical form of exotic cedar trees was called “aspiring” in the text. It was considered an important element, to be used as a symbol of estate owners’ expression of lofty plans and goals for their estates. Though one of the earliest designs Mr. Sears made for the estate, this may have been the most important, because it illustrated the power of carefully selected trees to transform a landscape.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Thomas Sears and the Trees of Reynolda

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

During the height of planting at Reynolda, trees large and small arrived from nurseries, including the famous Lindley Nursery in Greensboro. Many trees were dug from elsewhere on the grounds and moved. With other types of plantings, Mr. Sears usually noted that plants could be placed within the boundaries of an area at the discretion of the horticulturist, but he was much more precise in his direction for the placement of trees. On one plan, he stated that the species should be intermingled; on another, that each species should be grouped together. The sizes of trees either moved or purchased were also strict. On one plan he stated that the forester should be sure that the size ordered was the size received.

Horticulturist Robert Conrad, who began his work on the estate at about the same time as Mr. Sears, continued to plant and care for trees at Reynolda for over fifty years, carrying on the early appreciation for extraordinary and unusual trees. Others have also worked to preserve old, long-lived trees and to replace short-lived cherry, native dogwood, and redbud trees as they declined, though not in the numbers once required. Some of the magnificent trees long deceased live on in their descendents: seedlings of the beautiful, exotic Japanese varnish tree, with its gigantic leaves and shiny green bark, once isolated on the front lawn, continue to emerge from the forest floor nearby. Lavender bouquets of seedling princess tree flowers, which also graced the lawn, light the woods in springtime.

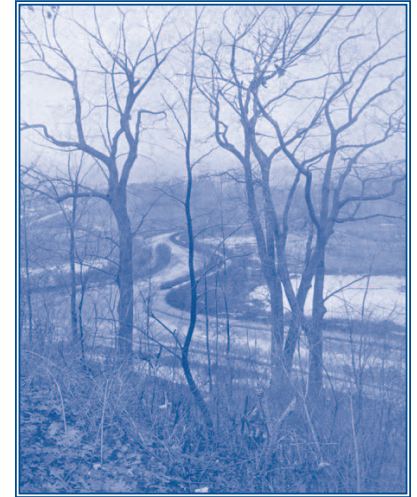
It has been almost one hundred years since young Thomas Sears sat at his drafting table and imagined what Reynolda could be. Does it look and function the way he envisioned it? Of course, we can't know, but we do know that he thought about how his design would look in the future. Again, we turn to the Hubbard and Kimball text to read the words of idealists who understood the potential of their work to change the world around them and who embraced the challenge of creating for the future.

He cannot judge and change and perfect his design before it leaves his hand, as the sculptor does, and often indeed his work comes to its perfection long after he is dead. He must, therefore, be able to imagine his completed design and to foresee and take account of the changes through which the planting must go from its present state to its full expression....he must choose some season of the year or some future year, when his design is to be its best...and in

designing have in mind the appearance of the plants at that time, neglecting to some extent their appearance before and after.

Some of the trees that the Harvard group studied at the Arnold Arboretum are now prized centenarians there. All but two of the nearly two dozen species in this esteemed collection are among the tree species that Mr. Sears chose to preserve or plant at Reynolda. Perhaps he knew that one day they would be cherished in this southern landscape as well.

Indeed, many of them, and myriad others, have grown old here. This passage in the Hubbard and Kimball text quoting an essay entitled "The Artistic Aspect of Trees" helps explain the thoughtfulness with which members of the Harvard group placed trees at the heart of their designs.



THE VIEW OF THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM WAS INCLUDED IN THE HUBBARD AND KIMBALL TEXT.

...a tree is not well understood until it is understood in all the stages of its growth. The typical shape of a young tree often differs very greatly from the typical shape of the same tree at maturity, and again from its typical shape in old age; and in planting regard must be paid to the question whether an immediate effect or a long-postponed effect ought to be most considered.

When the Gardens and Village staffs continue to replace trees like those that have been lost over the years, they are continuing to follow a philosophy embraced almost a century ago. These new plantings offer observant visitors the opportunity to understand trees in all ages and phases of their lives and in their great diversity. As long as Reynolda remains under their watchful care, trees—young and old, native and exotic, specimen and woodland—will be treasured features of Reynolda.

**An Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design*, Henry V. Hubbard and Theodora Kimball, 1917, reprinted 1967. 🌿

William Hollis Hatfield, Reynolda's Forester

Like many of the stories that surround the early days of Reynolda, the story of the forester, William Hollis Hatfield, is intriguing but elusive. With only a few letters and marks on planting plans, it is difficult to draw an accurate portrait, but from them we can see that he was well-educated, knowledgeable in his chosen field, and dedicated to his work at Reynolda.

A letter written to Mrs. Reynolds while he was stationed at Camp Devens in Ayer, Massachusetts, is dated September 30, 1917. He had just arrived at camp. He observes that many of the “boys” there with him were not educated past the high school level and had difficulty “looking at the change from a

civil to a military life in a psychological way.” He had volunteered to go

“to France immediately with the railroad engineers and foresters.” Although we don’t know exactly where and how he had received his education, we learn something about its scope. “I am counting on my previous training in forestry and engineering to make me an efficient helper, if nothing more.” He continues, “I

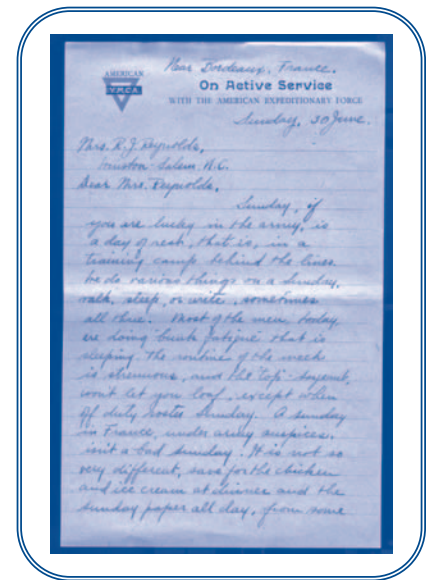
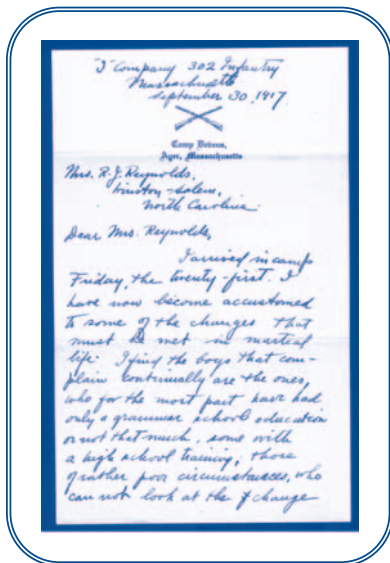
hope the development at Reynolda will progress with satisfying results. There is no reason why it should not be the banner estate in the south.... The bungalow must be quite finished now. Getting in the driveway, the approach, will add greatly to the appearance of the place.... I hope the fall planting will please you. I’m glad I worked out in the office the plans which will be carried out on the grounds this fall. It gives me satisfaction to know altho’ not actually carrying them out myself, I shall have had a hand in them just the same.... I shall always remember my days at Reynolda. I shall always have the most pleasant recollections.”

The next letter, dated June 30, 1918, comes from France, near Bordeaux. He describes a Sunday afternoon, reading Sunday newspapers and enjoying a chicken dinner with ice cream. He has been in France for eight weeks. He describes visiting the historic town of Bordeaux and seeing the many antiquities there. He does not refer to his work directly, but he describes his environment as only a plantsman—and a poet—would. “The climate resembles to a large extent that of your state. So the period of bloom and the conditions of vegetation is about the same. The cream

and crimson roses on the house wall have showered their petals over the pinks and pansies in the border below. The sweet disarray of the blown roses marks the midsummer garden as faithfully as the glorious blue of the delphiniums tapering about the splendors of the massed perennials. Everywhere on the marshland, the elegant meadowsweet is in full bloom, filling the air with a sweet fragrance.” Then, his thoughts turn homeward. “I wonder how the plants and flowers are doing at Reynolda. Everything must be beautiful there. I know very little about landscape conditions in the states in this wartime, but believe there must be a dearth as a result of the war.” He ends, “I thought you’d be interested to know my whereabouts for at this time a year ago, I was at Reynolda.”

Next, we see that he is back at Reynolda, working on the plan for the woodland around the “Freshwater Swimming Pool.” There, we see his checkmarks for completed plantings, the single x over the doomed tulip tree, a line indicating a “tan bark path,” his initials, and the date, September 23, 1919. 🌿

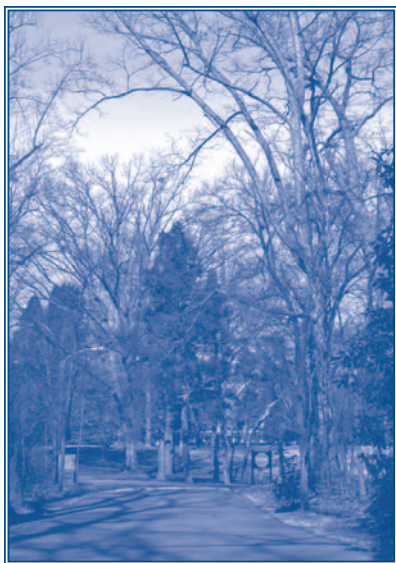
— Camilla Wilcox



A Distinctive American Landscape Philosophy

Like other graduates, faculty, and associates of the Harvard school, Thomas Sears believed that landscape architects, as they called themselves, could create fine art using plants, earth, water, and other elements in the same way that painters use brushes, canvas, and paint. It was a complex study that blended multiple disciplines: engineering, botany, etc. Graduates were thoroughly prepared to design any landscape, from a small suburban home to a large park, and they had a highly developed sense of the power of a well-designed landscape to elevate the human spirit. They took a special interest in the creation of large, private estates. They understood that the owners hoped to create legacy properties that would pass to their descendants. Using the English model that had been promoted by influential designers throughout the nineteenth century, they created peaceful parks surrounding their homes, but these prosperous Americans gave the concept a distinctively American interpretation. While the English first removed plants and structures and then rebuilt their landscapes to create the pastoral vision of their imaginations, the Americans emphasized preserving and enhancing the natural landscape as it existed. The Americans enthusiastically planted trees on their estates, but they understood that at least some of them would not come to maturity in their lifetimes. 🌱

— Camilla Wilcox



ENTRANCE DRIVE,
THE SAME LOCATION
PICTURED ON PAGE 9,
WINTER 2006.

A sampling of trees planted at Reynolda before 1925 Accepted names, Royal Horticulture Society, 2005

Acer rubrum — red maple
A. saccharum — sugar maple
Amelanchier canadensis — serviceberry
Cedrus deodara — deodara cedar
Cedrus libani — cedar of Lebanon
Cercidiphyllum japonicum — katsura tree
Cercis canadensis — eastern redbud
Chionanthus virginiana — fringe tree
Cornus florida — flowering dogwood
C. florida f. rubra — pink flowering dogwood
C. racemosa — paniced dogwood
C. amomum — silky dogwood
Cupressus arizonica 'Pyramidalis' — Arizona cypress
Firmiana simplex — Japanese varnish tree
Gymnocladus dioica — Kentucky coffee tree
Ilex opaca — American holly
I. vomitoria — yaupon holly
Juniperus virginiana — red cedar
Liriodendron tulipifera — tulip tree
Magnolia virginiana — sweet bay
M. grandiflora — southern magnolia
M. macrophylla — large-leaved cucumber tree
M. stellata — star magnolia
Paulownia tomentosa — princess tree
Pinus wallichiana — Bhutan pine
P. resinosa — red pine
P. thunbergii — Japanese black pine
Populus nigra 'Italica' — Lombardy poplar
Prunus serrulata var. spontanea —
 Japanese mountain cherry
Quercus nigra — water oak
Q. coccineus — scarlet oak
Q. palustris — pin oak
Salix alba var. vitellina 'Britzensis' — coral bark willow
S. alba v. hellina — golden willow
S. pendandra — laurel-leaved willow
Styrax japonicus — Japanese snowbell
Tilia americana — American linden
Ulmus americana — American elm
U. procera — English elm
U. 'Sarniensis' — Jersey elm
U. x. hollandica 'Dampieri' — Dampieri elm

Millie, The Garden Cat

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

London; and Sankeien Gardens in Yokohama, Japan, all have resident cats. Actually, it is rare to visit gardens these days and not see a feline or two.

Cats serve other purposes in the garden, too. In Venice, cats were thought to guard the health of the population. Venetians, trying to protect their island home from the ravages of the Bubonic Plague, began breeding cats in the thirteenth century to go after the black rats that served as hosts of the fleas carrying the disease. In Japan, most Shinto shrines are guarded by an army of felines. Today you can still see cats lounging around the Shrine in the Imperial Gardens in Tokyo. Sometimes a gardener simply likes cats and finds them entertaining. Gertrude Jekyll, the English designer widely known for her herbaceous borders, was such a person. Once when her young niece visited, Miss Jekyll organized a very elaborate tea party for her six cats and kittens, complete with written invitations, an elegantly set table, and a selection of kitty delicacies arranged on saucers.

According to one of Miss Jekyll's biographers, "guests" were seated on stools, paws resting on the table, except for Miss Maggie, a cat who evidently felt it discourteous to put her feet on the linen tablecloth. Apparently, the event was well received, as "a grand purring and washing of faces" followed.

Needless to say, we have our own cat here at Reynolda Gardens, the latest in a long line of resident felines. Preston Stockton, who started working here in 1980, joined the staff while Kate, a beautiful gray tabby named after Katharine Reynolds, was on board. Preston had grown up with dogs but soon learned that, here at Reynolda, Kate was queen. Kate was widely known and had a regular daily route through the Village: a nap on the couch and a saucer of milk at the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation...her own hand-knit afghan to lounge on at The Yarn Garden...leftovers at Ann and Pops Hendrix's house...and many stops in-between...until she returned to the office to recline on Preston's desk for the remainder of the day. Kate even managed to pay her way by keeping the mice and chipmunks in line. We all cried like babies when she had to be put down one Thanksgiving weekend, at the ripe old age of seventeen. Other cats have lived at Reynolda—Max, Geraldine, Mary, and Patsy, named after music great Patsy Cline. Some lived here until their deaths; we were able to place others in good homes.

In December of 1999, we began to notice a solid white cat hanging around the conservatory. She soon discovered the cat door left by her predecessors and moved into the office. All felines know a good thing when they see it, and this cat was no different. Before we knew it, she had decided to settle in and make the Gardens her permanent home. We decided to name her Millie Tilley—Millie after the rapidly approaching millennium and Tilley after Kimmey Tilley, a Gardens employee who had recently left Reynolda to start his own business. The staff and our friends next door at the Garden Boutique, Mary Ruth Howard and Janet Snow, contributed to Millie's health fund to get her the necessary veterinary care. Soon she was pronounced healthy, "fixed," and about four to five years old. Shortly afterwards Millie began developing her fan base, which has grown very large. She simply loves people, especially children, and will follow them throughout the garden, rubbing against their legs and begging for attention. In fact, for several years a Wake Forest coed came to Reynolda every Saturday to study so that she could keep Millie company. The student would spread a blanket on the slate outside the conservatory and spend the morning poring over her books with Ms. Tilley at her side. She said that the "poor cat" seemed so lonely while the staff was away on weekends that she felt sorry for her. I don't know about the "poor cat" part, but Millie certainly benefited from the attention; I just hope the young lady's grades did as well!

Except for the really cold winter months, Millie spends many hours with us as we work, always in sight, usually resting in the shade. Periodically she'll get up, walk over, and meow at our feet for a little attention. If we're too slow responding to her, she has been known to stand up and tap us with her front paws or butt us with her head. Once properly acknowledged, Millie will return to her spot for another cat nap. On cold or wet days, she sleeps in the greenhouse near David, in the Playhouse on Preston's chair, or in the Garden Boutique, where Mary Ruth and Janet spend the day cooing over her. I cannot begin to tell you how many people come through the gardens looking just for her. Millie's fans range from very small children, who visit almost daily, to a couple in their mid-eighties, who drive here weekly just to "check on her." I think we all field more questions about her whereabouts than anything else.

Millie Tilley has certainly used some of her nine lives, though. In July of 2003, we had to have her right ear removed when she developed a very serious and aggressive cancer. Her public was very alarmed by her absence, and several people helped us pay for her surgery. After a two week hospitalization, Millie

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Tell Me What You Hate

by Preston Stockton, RGWFU manager

Whenever I talk to other avid gardeners, the conversation inevitably turns to “What is your favorite plant?” I have to admit that my favorite plant depends on the day, the time, the location in the garden; I have many. But if you think about it, the more valuable information would be to share what plants you hate. Gardeners often learn some very hard lessons by growing certain plants. Catalogs and some nurseries are notorious for glossing over problems with specific plants in order to sell them. I have learned that living in a southern climate often makes a plant that is very well behaved up north a real problem here. When a description of a plant says that it can be invasive in sandy soil, you’d better assume that is the case, even in our clay. I have struggled in my own garden with blue lyme grass, northern sea oats, painter’s palette, and *Verbena bonariensis*. I like them but finally have decided that I don’t have enough time to keep them in line. That doesn’t mean my neighbor shouldn’t grow them; they are just not for my garden. But there are three plants that I think no one in their right mind should ever grow.

Bradford Pear, *Pyrus calleryana*

My number one woody plant to avoid would have to be the Bradford pear. Bradford pears are a variety of a pear native to Korea and China, which was first introduced to Western horticulture in 1908. A seedling that later became *P. calleryana* ‘Bradford’ was brought from Nanking in 1919. It wasn’t until 1963 that the USDA introduced the variety commercially. This tree was supposed to be the perfect street tree, with profuse early bloom, a restricted pyramidal shape, and good fall color. Today you see it planted everywhere, and I will be the first to admit that it is a beautiful tree.

Unfortunately, it takes ten to fifteen years to discover the big problem with Bradford pears. A combination of plant physiology and physics makes the Bradford very susceptible to wind and ice damage. The angle of the Bradford pear’s branches is generally too narrow, and as the tightly-crowded branches grow in girth, the tree begins to develop included (inward-growing) bark in the branch junctions, which creates a weakness. During summer thunderstorms with strong wind or a heavy ice storm, the tree self-destructs, splitting out substantial pieces of the limbs and trunk.

While many homeowners and local municipalities have quit planting the trees after learning of their weaknesses, Bradford pear trees still remain a hot seller. There is a fairly new housing development near my home that has yard after yard of these trees; the developer must have gotten a good deal on them. But after this past December’s ice storm, most of them are now gone. Certainly there are better and longer-lived trees to choose from for spring flower and good fall color.

Gooseneck Loosestrife, *Lysimachia clethroides*

When I was just a wee, fledgling gardener, still living with my parents, a family friend told my mother of a perennial she had purchased the year before and planted in her garden. She said it was called gooseneck flower. It was two to three feet tall and had lovely, white blooms that gracefully arched like a gooseneck. It bloomed in the summer over a long period and was a great cut flower. It was drought resistant, grew in sun or partial shade, and the foliage even had a nice yellow fall color.

Like all true southern gardeners, she wanted to share “a piece” of this wonderful plant with my mother. My mother was thrilled and directly took it home and planted it. What she should have done was run kicking and screaming far, far, away! I spent many an afternoon pulling and spraying, trying to get that stuff out of her garden. This undeniably beautiful, hardy, carefree plant is the absolute queen of plants that will take over a garden. And it’s well-nigh impossible to get rid of once it’s established. I know.

So, imagine my dismay when I looked at the original planting plans for the formal gardens here at Reynolda, and there it was—one single patch of the dreaded gooseneck loosestrife, *L. clethroides*!

Surely Thomas Sears, the landscape architect who designed Reynolda Gardens, had more sense than that. But maybe that is why he included only one small patch—one small patch that very quickly becomes one large one.

This plant will overwhelm anything and everything in its wake. I’m sure it is the prototype for Seymour, the man-eating plant in “The Little Shop of Horrors.” The root system looks like a tangle of pink and white spaghetti buried deep underground and is very difficult to pull or dig up. If you leave even one small piece, it will be back in full force the next season. Take my advice and stay far, far away from this perennial. If you just can’t help yourself and feel like you have the perfect spot, call Diane Wise, the gardener here at Reynolda who is in charge of the restored garden. She will load you up with plenty of plants, roots, and unprintable comments about this “lovely” plant.



**English Ivy,
*Hedera helix***

So, finally we get to my absolute, least-liked plant on the planet, English ivy. I know that many people say that ivy has its place in the landscape under certain conditions. English ivy will always be a favorite among gardeners and landscapers for its versatility. It is easy to grow, forms an excellent dense groundcover in shade where grass and other plants struggle, and will control erosion on steep slopes. It remains green all year, bringing color to the winter landscape. Because it tolerates air pollution and poor soils, it is ideal for urban settings.



The problem is that this vine grows virulently. I have always heard this adage about English ivy: The first year it sleeps, the second year it creeps, and the third year it leaps. I have found that the first year it sleeps, and the second year it goes crazy! I have watched it totally overtake the woods here at Reynolda, and the staff has spent hours and hours cutting and pulling it and making no progress. It has choked out the native woodland plants and grown up the trees. If you insist on growing ivy in your yard, you will need to plan on cutting it back at least twice during the growing season to keep it under control. Once it becomes a problem, it is terribly hard to eradicate. The ivy plant has very waxy leaves that prevent the uptake of herbicides. Herbicides may burn the leaves a little, but soon new ones will grow back out. A combination of cutting it back and spraying new tender leaves seems to work the best, although you often have to spray numerous times. The only fail-proof way to get rid of it is to pull it up and dig out the roots.

I admit it, I really hate ivy. To add insult to injury, I have developed a contact dermatitis to its leaves and break out in a terrible rash whenever I handle it. It obviously hates me as much as I hate it! So, the next time you are by the Gardens office and I want to talk plants, tell me what you hate. I'm sure I will appreciate the advice. 🌿

**Treasures From the Past:
Results of Garden Trials**

Last year, we tested some of the plants listed on an early Sears plan that has not been restored, in the hope that we would be able to find plants to replace some of those in the restored garden that have performed poorly. (See "The Search for a Single Plant Leads to a Treasury of Flowers," *The Gardener's Journal*, winter 2005.)

Many of these plants had been all but forgotten by modern gardeners, and we wanted to learn more about them by growing them. Although some, like the striking yellow-flowered Mexican tulip poppy,



Hunnemannia fumarifolia needed special soil amendments to

improve drainage, and others, like painted tongue, *Salpiglossis* 'Royale Mix' melted in the summer heat, the lovely cool season annuals returned our care by providing us with extraordinary beauty and fragrance. The silvery pastel flowers of *Godetia* 'Flamingo Rose Eye' and the fragrance of mignonette, *Reseda*



made our work worthwhile. Like gardeners of years past, we enjoyed the architectural form of the cannas and the floriferous dahlias through the summer and fall, and look forward to seeing multiple species of bellflower, *Campanula* bloom this spring. Some of these plants will be incorporated into established gardens, and many of them will be back in "Mrs. Reynolds' Test Garden" next to the All-America Rose Selections Garden. 🌿



— Camilla Wilcox

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Millie, The Garden Cat

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returned to Reynolda with forty-six stitches, looking a little like the cat of Frankenstein. We certainly had a lot of explaining to do to the many kiddies who regularly drag their parents to the Gardens to visit her. Just a year later, in July of 2004, Millie came down with a really nasty virus that required a stay of two days at our vet's office, three days at the emergency clinic, and three days at Carolina Veterinary Specialists in Greensboro. It was touch and go, and we almost lost her. Somehow Millie managed to pull through, but it was several months before she completely recovered. Today she is doing great, and we are often asked "What happened to her ear?!" Our explanation always brings her a few extra pats.

So, I guess you're probably wondering about Millie's contribution to Reynolda Gardens. Does she earn her special canned food, her numerous beds and blankets placed in various warm and sunny locations throughout the greenhouse, and the French

sunscreen for her pale pink ears (oops, ear!)? Well, if you're asking if she keeps the rodents out of the beds—no, she doesn't. If you want to know if she keeps the rats under control—not exactly, although we don't see many rats here. And if you're wondering if she guards the premises—wrong again. But let me tell you what she does and does really well. She entertains us royally, loves us completely, and serves as the very best public relations tool we have. And that, my friends, is enough. 🐾



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