

TRAILS IN HISTORY

Official Newsletter of the Lee County Historical Society

Volume 43, Number 1 January 2010 Published Quarterly

Winter Meeting of Lee County Historical Society

January 10, 2010

2:30 pm

LCHS Trade Center Museum

Loachapoka, Alabama

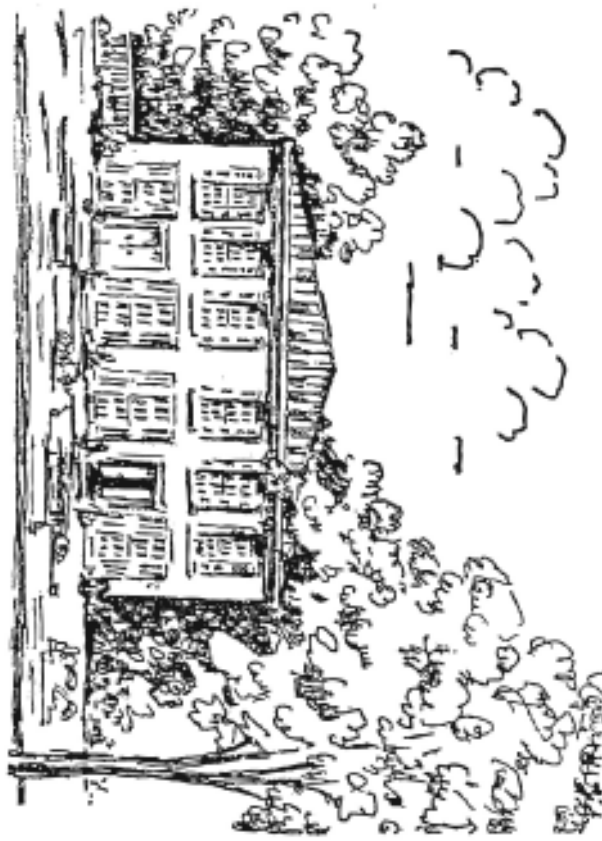
**“Southeastern Gardens and Plants
of the 1850s”**

Speaker: Dr. Thornton F. Jordan



Dr. Thornton Jordan is retired Associate Professor of English at Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia. He received his Ph.D. degree from Indiana University in 1977, and taught American Literature at CSU from 1971-1993. However, he is best known for his contributions to the region through historical preservation and his research and writing about historical gardens and plants of the South.

In 1982 he received the Robert Woodruff Award as an Outstanding Patron by Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries and in 2002 he received the Governor's Award in the Humanities. He has served on the Board of Trustees of Historic Westville from 1985 through 2005 and was chairman for six years. He chaired the Executive Committee of Westville for three years. If you go to Westville's website (<http://www.westville.org>) and look under research, you'll find a collection of articles that Dr. Jordan has written in his "Southern Garden Series", one of which is included in this issue of *Trails*. At Westville, he initiated an annual Dulcimer Festival, Fiddle Contest, and Storytelling, and restored five antebellum gardens. In addition to his volunteer work at Westville, he serves on the Board of Trustees and Collections Committee of the Columbus Museum, the Board of Trustees of Trees Columbus, Inc. (2001-present), and was the donor of the Carson McCullers house, now the Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians, Columbus State University.



Lee County Historical Society
P. O. Box 206
Loachapoka, AL 36865

Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Loachapoka, AL
Permit No. 2

LEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 206
LOACHAPOKA, AL 36865

web address:

www.leecountyhistoricalsociety.org

e-mail: lchs1968@hotmail.com

Organized October 25, 1968, chartered as a non-commercial, non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Alabama, Charter filed with Probate Court, Lee County, Alabama, November 8, 1968.

OFFICERS

President: Deborah McCord
Vice-President: Charles C. Mitchell
Treasurer: Harvey Gosser
Secretary: Jeannette Frandsen
HCC Delegate: Ann Pearson
Trails Editor: Janet Sugg

TRUSTEES

Term expires December 31, 2011
Ruth Ann Bond
Kay Campbell
Pat Conover
Sheila Eckman
Zack Sprayberry
Carl Summers, Jr.

Term expires December 31, 2010
Dottie Marcinko
Arvle Marshall
Deborah McCord
John Ross
William Wilson
Jim Witte

Term expires December 31, 2009
Doyle Keasal
Charles H. Mitchell
Betty Patterson
Janet Sugg
Peggie Webster
Barbara Gosser

MUSEUM CALENDAR

January 9 - Second Saturday,
10am - 3pm

January 10 - Regular Meeting
2:30pm - Dr. Thornton F. Jordan,
Southeastern Gardens and Plants
of the 1850s

February 13 - Second Saturday,
10am - 3pm

March 13 - Second Saturday,
10am - 3pm

March 14 - LCHS Board Meeting,
2:30pm

April 10 - Second Saturday,
10am - 3pm

April 11, 2010 - Regular Meeting
2:30pm

**April 23-25th - Second Annual Lee
County Gathering, Old-time
Music Festival** - Special guest
instructor Joe Collins, 2007
National Mountain Dulcimer
Champion. For more info see
www.leecountygathering.com.

May 8, 2010 - Second Saturday,
10am - 3pm

LCHS MEMBERSHIP

Due: January 1 of each year
Individual: \$20 per individual
Family: \$30 (spouse and children)
Additional Donations Appreciated

All memberships and donations to LCHS are tax deductible. Please send your check (payable to LCHS), your mailing address (and e-mail address if applicable) to

Lee County Historical Society
P. O. Box 206
Loachapoka, AL 36865

Field Trip Feedback

Jessie Summers, LCHS museum Curator

We received many delightful letters from children in the fourth grade at Wrights Mill school about their recent field trip. Each one is a treasure! Many were gaily illustrated. One student wrote on the front a very pretty, "Thank You", and included a finely drawn colorful turtle. They all learned that Loachapoka means "the dwelling place of the turtle." On the inside page was, "Thank you so much. My favorite part was the one room school house." Added was an Indian with a headdress and below is a picture of school desks and one more 'thank you' in blue, red and bright green.

Elizabeth drew a happy, colorful cover of flowers and wrote, "Dear Loachapoka Museum, Thank you for taking the time out of your day to come and teach us all the interesting facts about Alabama. All the stations were WONDERFUL! It is really good that you know all about these amazing facts.

Right when I stepped off the bus I was full of awesome facts!" Then, in very big red print on the next page, "You're great!!!!!!!"

Marcus liked our program too. "Thank you for all you've done for us, and thank you for teaching us about the pioneer life. You are the best!"

Greg wrote, "I had a great time. The part I liked most was the blacksmith because he was making S hooks but he gave us 3 S hooks. I learned a lot about the Indians who lived in Alabama. Thank you for letting us come to the Museum."

Lauren drew really good pictures of one of our lady demonstrators in her old fashioned dress, and one of Michael demonstrating blacksmithing at the fire in the forge.

The ending of one letter was, "P.S. I loved all of the groups." I want to add to that: We loved all of the students!

Membership / Donation

Lee County Historical Society
P. O. Box 206
Loachapoka, AL 36865

I want to support the work of the Lee County Historical Society.
All contributions are Tax deductible. Federal I.D. No. 23-7227476

- Individual - \$20 Family-\$30 Friend - \$50 Patron - \$100
- Support - \$250 Blue Ribbon - \$500 Benefactor - \$1,000

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

continued from page 13

County and donated it for our railroad exhibit.

Dorothy Moore of Montgomery donated a desk for the teacher in the Log Cabin's school room.

Linda Dixon gave us a most charming collection of 4 hand made aprons and one dress, all of which we can use on Fair Day and other occasions too.

Mike Garrett gave the Society a 1928 edition of *A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States 1785-1923* by Alfred Charles True. It will be on exhibit in the bookcase that belonged to Dr. John Frederick Dugger, who served as the first director of the Cooperative Extension Service.

Many thanks to those who have generously given to the Restoration Fund.

- Mr. and Mrs. John E. Barker
- Mr. and Mrs. Albert Blonquist
- Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Bond

- Ms. Joan Colburn
- Dr. Arthur Cooper
- Ms. Christine Danner
- Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Estridge
- Ms. Marjorie Fitzpatrick
- Ms. Mary Nelle Hester
- Dr. and Mrs. R.E. Holman
- Dr. Sara Hudson
- Mr. and Mrs. Bob Juster
- Ms. Jo Krebs
- Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Marcinko
- Dr. and Mrs. Arvle Marshall
- Mr. David A. Massey
- Mr. and Mrs. Charles McLain
- Dr. Howard E. Rearden
- Dr. and Mrs. Billy Tamplin
- Ms. Ann Thompson
- Ms. Margaret Webster
- Mr. Dwight Whitley
- Ms Elizabeth S. Williams
- Mr. and Mrs. Edward T. Williams
- Dr. and Mrs. James Witte
- Mr. Joseph H. Yeager

SECOND SATURDAYS

On the second Saturday of every month, volunteers and re-enactors gather at the LCHS Museum in period attire to demonstrate their arts and crafts. Blacksmiths are usually working at the forge, spinners and weavers are upstairs in the Trade Center, and someone is always cooking up a meal in the log cabin over the open or outdoors. The Trade Center Museum is always open on Second Saturdays, and local dulcimer players gather to practice. What a great opportunity for LCHS members and visitors to visit the museum! If you have a skill to demonstrate or just would like to help out on Second Saturdays, just dress up in 19th Century attire and join the fun. It's kind of like a mini-Historical Fair throughout the year!

- **January 9, 2010**
- **February 13, 2010**
- **March 13, 2010**

LCHS President's Report

by Deborah McCord

Our Mission: to relate the history and traditions of Lee County, Alabama (and the surrounding areas) through preservation, restoration, education, presentation, publication, and acquisition.

Your board has worked hard this year to fulfill the mission of the LCHS. The successes of 2009 include:

- Replacing the crumbling exterior of our circa 1845 main museum building, restored doors/windows, repaired downstairs plaster, added ceiling insulation, and painted downstairs. (**Approx. \$105,543 in renovations**)
- Hosting five school fieldtrips, serving over 500 students of Lee county, thanks to funding from the West Point Fund Grant Program.
- Providing three "in-school" demonstrations for Alabama Heritage Days (1,000+ students).
- Hosting an old time music celebration, "Lee County Gathering" in April (100 people each day), teaching lessons on instruments such as dulcimers, autoharps, banjos, mandolins, and guitars.
- Receiving a Historical Records and Artifacts Board grant to have a museum consultant write a plan for proper care, storage, and display of historical documents.
- Volunteers worked over 3,000 hours in organizing, recording, and storing historical documents. Thank you Betty Patterson for chairing the volunteer committee.
- Hosting two university student interns during the summer, allowing us to open the museum for regular hours, four days per week.
- Holding three history programs with an average attendance of 75, arranged by Charles C. Mitchell.

- Holding Second Saturday of the month demonstrations, open to the public, to demonstrate 1850's crafts and lifestyle, with attendance ranging from 50-100. Thank you Charles C. Mitchell.
- Our annual Historical Fair in October was made a success by the dozens of volunteers working long hard hours. We are grateful for the leadership of Charles H. Mitchell and for each volunteer.
- Started a weekly dulcimer group, the Whistle Stop Pickers, to teach old time music and folk instrument lessons. Group membership is open to the public.
- Member volunteers rebuilt the old Loachapoka calaboose. Thank you Allen McCord and Bill Wilson.
- Holding a Christmas Open House on the second Saturday in December, complete with Father Christmas at the tree, Mrs. Claus reading stories, homemade ornaments for the children, make your own fresh greenery wreaths (Peggy Mitchell), punch and cookies. The Whistle Stop Pickers provided Christmas music all day.

We are proud of our accomplishments for 2009, but we still have much to do to reach acceptable conditions for a museum. Through the generosity of our members and friends, the above mentioned renovations were completed. We still need to replace rotting floor joists and flooring on the ground

continued on page 4

continued from page 4

floor, install storm windows and doors (**the museum will be closed from January 11th through February 12th for floor repairs**), and install a heat/air system to control temperature and moisture necessary to protect our priceless historical documents and artifacts. **These additional improvements for the Trade Center will cost approximately \$88,000.** Please consider making a generous donation toward the renovations. **Without you, these needed repairs will not be made.**

Whistle Stop Pickers Dulcimer News

The Whistle Stop Pickers have enjoyed a great year. The year started with under ten members and now over 25 members are meeting every Saturday afternoon from 1:00 until 3:00. The Pickers were in big demand this holiday season, playing at the Museum of East Alabama, Camp Hill Baptist Church Senior luncheon, EAMC SNIF Unit, LCHS Christmas Open House, the American Legion in Opelika, the Model A Club of Phenix City, and at Cambridge Place in Opelika.

As we have grown this year, we find our group holds many different levels of playing ability. To assist the new players with learning the skills they need, we are **offering a Beginning Dulcimer Players five week course, starting the 2nd Saturday in January.** It will run

Please join me in thanking each officer and board member for the successes of the year along with Jessie Summers and all the many volunteers. I would also like to thank the members who have supported the renovation project financially.

In closing, let me encourage you to come out and join us for our History Programs (held quarterly), our Second Saturdays, and at other times when we are open. We truly have a marvelous museum. Share the news with others and encourage them to come out.

for five consecutive weeks. Anyone interested should contact Deborah McCord (bigalmccord@bellsouth.net) or Bob Taunton (banjobob@charter.net) so that the appropriate number of books can be ordered. There will be no charge for the class, just the price of the book (\$10 each). Bob and Rose Taunton will be leading this class.

Please take that old dulcimer off the shelf, or out from under the bed and join us on Saturday afternoons. All acoustic instruments are welcome. We have recently added a mandolin player. Guitars, fiddles, banjos, autoharps, and more add to the beautiful sound of the Whistle Stop Pickers. Come join in the fun. Play, listen, or dance if you wish. We are happy to have you join us.



Whistle Stop Pickers play at the LCHS Christmas Open House.

Museum Report Jessie Summers, LCHS museum Curator

We have so many people to thank for their kind and generous deeds! Our latest happy event was on December 12th when we had an Open House. Our very talented president, **Deborah McCord**, cut down two big, beautiful fir trees and decorated them with lights and pretty ornaments - one for the Trade Center and one for the Log Cabin and she also supervised the lovely tea table which offered hot coffee, cider and cookies. **Peggy Mitchell** made beautiful wreaths and put fresh flowers around. **Winnie Rowell** kept busy assisting decorating and serving tea.

Father Christmas met everyone at the front door, to everyone's delight. The Whistle Stop Pickers played their dulcimers, guitar and banjo to a happy audience.

Out in the Log Cabin **Vera McNutt** and **Jeannette Frandsen** had pine

cones, paint, glitter and many other things for children to use in the school room when they made ornaments for the Cabin's kitchen tree. The wood burning stove that **Charles C. Mitchell** donated and **George Rowell** installed, kept them warm.

All of our guests and our workers were a relaxed and cheerful group in spite of horrible weather.

Very special guests in December were **Dr. and Mrs. Robert Holman** from Elloree, S.C. and their hosts **Mr. and Mrs. Paul Schillings** from Auburn. We hope they will come again on a sunny day in the spring.

Mark Stevens donated many medicine bottles and other things for the pharmacy in Dr. McLain's office.

Rudine Wilson gave us a large cast iron wash pot with legs.

Kristi Campbell painted a scene of the depot in McCullough in east Lee

continued on page 14

Father Christmas chats with Evan Meadows at the LCHS Christmas Open House.



Elizabeth Ames and Evan Meadows enjoyed listening to Christmas stories read to them by Mrs. Claus.

Report from the Buildings and Grounds Committee

Bill Wilson, Chair, Charles H. Mitchell, and Arvle Marshall

With 10 major structures on the Museum grounds, there are always things that need repairing. This is an on-going project. The following items are things that need to be done to maintain the buildings and grounds. They are listed in order of need but the list is constantly changing. Volunteers are always needed and appreciated to help work on this list. If you'd like to help, please contact Charles H. Mitchell (chmitchell@bellsouth.net) or Arvle Marshall (sweetbaysprings@bellsouth.net).

Need

1. Winterize all buildings; drain pipes in outdoor rest rooms; check waterheaters *COMPLETED*
2. Install light for outside cooking area
3. Complete Loachapoka Calaboose/Jailhouse *IN PROGRESS*
4. Cut firewood and stack in shed
5. Install shelving in Block House
6. Remove partition or cut a door between rooms in Block Building
7. Install screen to keep squirrels out of Block Building
8. Erect martin gourds
9. Chink Log Cabin *IN PROGRESS*
10. Repair caulk in McLain Building; repair siding
11. Repair light fixture in meeting room over kitchen door in Trade Center
12. Clean up rubble from old brick building (parking lot) *COMPLETED*
13. Clean up area east of Blacksmith's shop
14. Repair Bandstand
15. Install pump in well in Crops Garden
16. Repair wiring in Block Building
17. Construct syrup mill/whiskey still house
18. Arrange haying exhibit in McLain Building shed
19. Repair farm tools
20. Move west gate fence *COMPLETED*
21. Erect "bumpers" on fence at west gate *COMPLETED*
22. Fix wiring problem in McLain Building
23. Indian village construction *NEEDS PLAN AND BD. APPROVAL*
24. New water heater for Trade Center *COMPLETED*
25. Clean up cinder pile at Blacksmith's shop
26. General plumbing repair *COMPLETED*
27. Repair April storm damage to trees and buildings *COMPLETED*
28. Replace broken glass in Taylor Whatley building (front and side window)
29. Rewiring of Trade Center Museum
30. Move syrup mill to site near Crops Garden

Status

Emigrants, Immigrants, and Natives in Westville's Gardens

By Thornton F. Jordan, Ph.D.

This article is one of several that are part of the "Southern Gardens Series" written by Dr. Thornton Jordan. This article and others can be viewed on the Westville website <http://www.westville.org/research>. This article is reprinted by permission of the author.

By the 1830s, some European cultural traditions had been expunged from the young American nation. The Colonial sport of bowling on outdoor greens, for instance, had gone the way of the Royalist governors. But the passion for ornamental gardening had not suffered from similar political prejudices. Though their owners might not have realized it, by the 1830s a typical American garden was thoroughly cosmopolitan. Native American plants stood petal to stem with plants from the known reaches of the world, and the gardens of Europe were enhanced with varieties from the New World.

EUROPEAN

Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) came from the Mediterranean and was possibly a native in southern Europe, including Britain, where it grew wild on the banks of rivers. Dill was native of southern Europe and also Cape of Good Hope. **Rue** (*Ruta graveolens*), the "herb of grace," was native to the Mediterranean



Rue (*Ruta graveolens*)

and mentioned in both Aristotle and Pliny. Pliny wrote that engravers, painters, and sculptors ate the leaves to preserve eyesight. **Rosemary** (*R. officinalis*) was from southern Europe and Turkey. It had been grown by Romans for garlands and coronets and was associated with fidelity. Mentioned in Britain by the 11th century, it reached America by 17th.

Candytuft (*Iberis sempervirens*), which grew on Mediterranean sea cliffs and reached the gardens of northern Europe in the mid-18th century. **Money plant** (*Lunaria annua*) was probably native to Italy. Known also as "white satin flower," "honesty," and "silver plant," it was reputed to be one of the first European garden plants to reach America.



Money plant (*Lunaria annua*)

Rose campion (*Lychnis coronaria*) was from southern Europe and was in gardens by mid-14th century. The purplish-red variety was being grown by 1597. **Narcissus** was known in ancient Greece and Egypt and all around Mediterranean, though deliberate hybridizing did not begin until latter half of 19th century. **Soapwort** (*Soponaria officinalis*) at Bryan-Worthington came from Europe and Central Russia and was used in colonial America to cleanse delicate fabrics. **Periwinkle** (*Vinca minor*) from southwest and Central Europe was used in the Middle Ages as a garland for criminals on their way to execution in Britain. In the 14th century it was called "joy of the ground." **Vinca major**, found naturalized in the woods at Westville, was probably native to the west and central Mediterranean and was probably introduced later than *vinca minor*.

Salvia (*Salvia officinalis*) was an ancient garden plant in southern Europe,

continued on page 6

continued from page 5

though not used in England before the 15th century. By the end of the 17th, it was in American gardens. Most of the other varieties of salvia came from Brazil and Mexico, including “cardinal flower” (*Salvia fulgens*), and blue salvia (*Salvia patiens*). **Sweet William** (*Dianthus barbatus*), came from western Europe, the Near East, and Turkey. Henry VIII grew it at Hampton Court and Jefferson at Shadwell in 1767. **Tansy** (*Tanacetum vulgare*) was native to England and in gardens by Middle Ages. **Feverfew** (*Tanacetum parthenium*) was probably native to southeast Europe and naturalized in Europe and North and South America.



Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*)

Originally **garden lupines** all derived from European crop species. *L. alba* from the Balkans and the Aegean, the the Romans used for oil and fodder. *L. luteus* was from southwest Europe and was a crop plant but also a garden plant used for perfume since the late 16th cent. The first perennial was introduced from Virginia in 1637, *L. perrenne* (now lost) The blue-purple lupine arrived from the west coast of America in 1826 (*L. polyphyllus*). The **madonna lily** (*Lilium candidum*) was possibly from Anatolia. The Greeks imported it from Asia Minor as salve or ointment, sacred to several goddesses and the Romans distributed it throughout the Empire. It reached America by 1830.

From further reaches, among the vegetables grown occasionally in Westville’s demonstration plots, **pumpkin** was native of India and the Levant. **Cucumber**, originally from the East Indies, had been cultivated by Egyptians and esteemed by Romans. It was intro-

duced into England in 1573 and made its way to the American colonies. **Sweet potato** was a native of both China and India. It was first cultivated in England in 1597 and is the potato mentioned in Shakespeare. The “Irish potato” was scarcely known at the time. **Garlic** was native of Sicily and South France.

FAR EASTERN

The Far East provided a number of other immigrants. *Impatiens balsamini*, or “**Touch Me Not**” was a native of India, Malaya, and China. Chinaberry, or “Pride-of-China,” Pride-of-India,” “Indian lilac” “was introduced from Asia by Michaux. **Hostas** began to appear in England in 1780s but were not common until 1830s. By this time *H sieboldiana* was common in London gardens, because it didn’t mind the smoke pollution.



Touch Me Not (*Impatiens balsamina*)

Day lilies (*Hemerocallis*) were originally Asian. The lemon-yellow, perfumed daylily, *H. flava*, was probably native to Asia, though it had been in Europe so long that it was once thought native to foothills of southern Alps. It was common in country gardens in 1660s in Europe and popular in American cottage gardens by 1800s The orange, tawny *H. fulva* was grown by the Chinese for beauty and edibility. The Chinese called it “flower of forgetfulness,” because it supposedly caused loss of memory and thus of sorrow. In Europe it was used for “hot swellings of the dugges after childbirth.” In 1860 double form of *H. fulva* was brought from Japan and was sold in London by 1861. In 1864 a variegated form arrived, and both were known as “kwanso” types. *H. maculata*, with a bronze patch

Scenes from the 38th Annual Historical Fair October 24, 2009

Thanks to all the many volunteers who helped to make our Historical Fair a success.



Everyone enjoyed watching a restored, stationary hay baler demonstration at the Historical Fair. This new demonstration was part of an exhibit by Rayford Johnson and the East Alabama Antique Tractor Club of Wedowee, Alabama.



Children enjoyed turning the syrup mill to make sugarcane juice lemonade.



LCHS volunteer, Mike Mulvaney, helps a youngster cut a stalk of sugarcane to take home.



Even very little ones helped dig sweet potatoes during the Historical Fair in October.

continued from page 9

miles west of the target. The pilot asked each crew member, "Do we abort and try to get back home or do we press on and try to make Schweinfurt?" The crew's unanimous decision – press on. But it soon became apparent that the Fortress' wounds were mortal and the command was given to "BAIL OUT NOW!" The tail gunner's escape hatch had jammed so Dick Teague crawled on to the plane's side door which was partially jammed. The crew had to push and kick one another through the door and out of the aircraft.

Dick Teague came down in a pine forest miraculously hitting the ground instead of a tree and, except for a sore ankle, was uninjured. As instructed, he buried his parachute and flight suit under a pile of pine needles. It was mid-afternoon and the countryside was pretty much deserted. He noticed some old people working in a field but managed to avoid them.

He thought of trying to make his way to Switzerland, but that was miles away. He tried to find some of his flight mates, but the plane had been moving so fast that they were scattered miles from where he landed. Miraculously, all nine crew members did come down safely. All were captured, and all survived the war.

He spent most of the afternoon avoiding the scattered villages and inhabitants he saw in the distance. Toward dark he stumbled across a railroad track. His first thought was, "If I

could hop a train, I might just be able to make it to safety somewhere." He followed the tracks until he saw a small town with a depot. Carefully circling the village, he planned to wait in the woods and try to catch a train after it pulled out from the station.

It was getting close to midnight. Suddenly he came out of the woods onto an open field. There was a full moon so he could see the railway in the distance. As he was making his way toward the tracks, suddenly there rang out the command – unmistakable in English or in German – "HALT!" He wheeled around and found himself staring into the barrels of two rifles.

Years later he wrote: "Right then I stopped thinking of my buddies and everything else and walked toward them with my hands up. All hopes of reaching Switzerland and freedom were wiped out. I was now a prisoner of war."

Written by Winston Smith T in the spring of 2006.

Author's Note: I could never have written this account of Dick Teague without the help of Mary Jane Teague who graciously lent me materials she kept these many years as well as recounting things she remembered being told by Dick and some papers he wrote himself shortly after the war telling about his experiences. I have also included a few items that I remember Dick telling me about those World War II years. My thanks to Mary Jane Teague for her invaluable help.

He thought of trying to make his way to Switzerland, but that was miles away. He tried to find some of his flight mates, but the plane had been moving so fast that they were scattered miles from where he landed.

on each petal arrived 1897. By the end of 19th century new species flooded Europe. Some arrived in America and were re-exported to Europe. By 1900, modern types were being bred in America. Currently there are about 7,000 varieties.

AMERICAS

A village like Westville represents an American town on the absolute western frontier of the United States in the 1830s, but a trip through its period gardens demonstrates how cosmopolitan was the world of even the frontier gardener.

After Jefferson rode his horse home from Washington to Monticello in 1807, he had already begun thinking about the end of his second term as president in two years, so he sat down to plan his flower gardens. Visitors to Monticello today will be told that 25% of his species were natives. That meant, of course, that 75% of them were immigrants. However, while American gardeners owed many of their ornamental and food plants to immigrants from far shores, North and South America were, after all, the New World. As such, even as early as the 16th century, Europeans were eager to try our natives.

Among our North American emigrants, the **spiderwort** or widow's tears (*Tradescantia virginiana*) was native to eastern North America. It was introduced to Britain after 1654 and was one of the first colonial American ornamentals to be grown in English gardens. **Jerusalem artichoke**, a close relative of the sunflower, was originally a native west of the Mississippi River that was taken to Europe in 17th century where it was known as the "potato of Canada." Its name, though, is a misnomer. "Jerusalem" is a corruption of the



Spiderwort
(*Tradescantia virginiana*)

Italian girasole, or sunflower, and artichoke was from the fancied resemblance of the boiled root to a true artichoke. **Gaillardia**, or "blanket flower" was a Texas native. **Evening primroses** (*Oenothera*) are mostly American. *Oenothera grandiflora* was an American native, and *Oenothera biennis*, a tree primrose, was sent from Virginia to Padua as early as 1619. *Phlox subulata* was sent by Bartram from America to England in 1745. *Phlox paniculata*, or "common purple" phlox was introduced to England 1730 and the first garden variety was developed in 1824.

The parent **rhododendrum** (*Rhododendrum catawbiense*) was found in 1799 on the Roan River in the mountains between North Carolina and Tennessee by John Fraer.

Latin America offered another rich source of ornamentals for the Old World. *Oenothera longiflora*, an uncommonly large, showy yellow type of evening primrose, was a native of Buenos Aires. **Four O'clock** (*Mirabilis jalapa*) was known as the "Marvel of Peru." Seeds were brought from Peru to Spain in the 16th century and thence to England before they emigrated to America. **Pineapple sage** (*Salvia rutilans*) came from Mexico. **Nasturtium** (*Tropaeolum mahus*), a native of Peru, was introduced to Spain and thence into to England in 1681. **Penstemon**, the popular border type (*Penstemon hartwegii*) came from Mexico in 1825 but was not grown outside until 1838. Fifteen new species were introduced between 1827-1834. By 1839 it was considered one of the greatest boons conferred upon English gardens by the discovery of the New World.



Primrose
(*Oenothera grandiflora*)

continued on page 8

continued from page 7

Verbena was introduced to England from South America (1826-1837) and was for a time synonymous with “bedding” plants. But like fabrics, colors, and architecture, flowers go in and out of fashion. Take the case of the **petunia** —from “petun,” a Brazilian word for tobacco—which was introduced into Europe in the 1830s. It offered a sensational splash of color in the garden, and by 1840 there were many hybrids. But by the 1880s verbenas and petunias were losing their fascination, giving way to pelargoniums, which we know by the common name of **geraniums**. They were introduced to Europe from South Africa in 1631 but didn’t become a fashion rage until the 1880s. Another variety, *Geranium maculata*, came from North America in 1732.

Poinsettia was introduced 1833 by Joel R. Poinsett of Charleston, who was minister to Mexico under Andrew Jackson. Helianthus or **sunflowers** were all from North and South America. They had made their way into European gardens by the 16th century. By the 1750s, smoke and fog in London made the perennial form more popular.

Among the North American trees that made their way back to Europe, the *Magnolia grandiflora*, or “big laurels”, were native in states south of North Carolina. The large leaf magnolia (*Magnolia macrohylla*) Michaux discovered near Charleston in 1789 and introduced it to Europe in 1800. Between 1787-1796, Andre Michaux also discovered *Magnolia cordata*, or the “yellow cucumber tree,” near Augusta. He sent it to France and never found another one. Many years later, Louis Berkman discovered another in the woods 18 miles south of Augusta. **Fringe tree** or Grancy

Graybeard (*Chionanthus virginica*) was discovered in Virginia.

Berkman nursery in Augusta, by the way, called “Fruitlands,” was one of the two largest nurseries in the South before the Civil War, the other being in Richmond, Virginia. In his 1861 catalogue, Berkman listed 1,300 varieties of pears, 900 apples, 300 grapes, 300 peaches, 100 camellias and 100 azaleas. Many of the varieties of camellias and azaleas he cultivated for outdoor culture he imported from Belgium, Germany, France and Japan.

The **catalpa** and **pecan** are native to America. **Osage orange** was native to the Arkansas River and tributaries of Mississippi River. Fine-grained and very very elastic, its wood was used for bows, hence its common name Bodac, a corruption of bois d’arc. **Sweetgum** was the most widely diffused tree in America, though its use is limited. It does not split well for firewood, and is unsuitable for boat building. In fact, I have run across a reference to it as “alligator wood,” implying that it readily sinks. If sawn, it can be used for furniture, though it is not popular. According to its common name in Europe, “liquid amber,” it enjoys a somewhat higher status there. Its gum was exported from Mexico and used as a styptic. In shops it is called “white balsam of Peru.” Both a stimulant and an aromatic, it has been long used in France as a perfume, especially for gloves.

Sources:

Leighton, Ann. *American Gardens of the Nineteenth Century*. Amherst: U. Mass. Press, 1987.

Betts, Edwin M. and Hazelhurst Bolton Perkins. *Thomas Jefferson’s Flower Gardens at Monticello*. Charlottesville: U. Press of Virginia, 1986.

The Dick Teague Story (part I)

by Winston Smith T

This is the story of Dick Teague’s experiences in WW II. Dick Teague was the county agent for Lee County for 30 plus years.

By 1943 it was clear that World War II had turned in favor of the Allies and against the Germans. Still, there were difficulties and failures to be faced and overcome before final victory two years later. One such tragic failure was the American daylight air raid on Schweinfurt in August of 1943.

The British and U.S. disagreed on bombing strategy. The British wanted to make the Germans pay for the devastation England suffered during the blitz. Their policy – massive retaliatory nighttime raids on German population centers. Our Eighth Air Force planners came up with a counter plan which seemed brilliant in its unorthodox simplicity. We would level the production facilities of a few items critical to the German war effort. By knocking out a key industry we would cripple the whole German war machine.

And, in this regard, nothing could be more critical than ball bearings. Nothing mechanized could run without them.

German ball bearing production was concentrated at Schweinfurt, a town of some fifty thousand people on the Main River in Bavaria – far away from our bases in Britain. Two factors would play critical roles in the mission. First, because pinpoint accuracy would be required, the raid would have to be in daylight – obviously much more dicey than

a nighttime attack. Secondly, because of the distance to the target, the B-17’s would not be protected by fighter escorts. This last was deemed to be undesirable but not necessarily prohibitive of going ahead with the mission. After all, the B-17 had been built to fend for itself, if need be, with a crew of gunners located in the plane’s most perilous post of all – that of the tail gunner who sat in the rear of the plane exposed to attack from all directions.

Our Eighth Air Force planners came up with a counter plan which seemed brilliant in its unorthodox simplicity. We would level the production facilities of a few items critical to the German war effort.

One of those tail gunners that day was a man named Richard Teague – Staff Sgt. Richard Teague. In later years Dick Teague would become one of the best known and best liked men in Lee County – our local county agent for over 30 years. But in August of 1943, there he was – aloft over Germany – shivering in the freezing cold of his perch as he anxiously scanned the skies behind his aircraft, ‘The Great Speckled Bird’.

The raid on Schweinfurt was a disaster. It turned out that despite all those machine guns, the Flying Fortress still needed fighter support. We lost 36 bombers – a 16 percent attrition rate – one totally unacceptable for a single mission.

‘The Great Speckled Bird’ was one of the planes that went down that day. It was hit near Aschaffenburg some 80

continued on page 10