

The

REYNOLDA GARDENS
of Wake Forest University

Winter
1999

Gardener's

JOURNAL

Gifts

July 1, 1997 – June 30, 1998

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LIST CONTINUES ON FOLLOWING PAGES

THE GARDEN *in the* CONTEXT of *its* TIME . . .

WORLD WAR I, COMMERCE, and the GARDEN

by Camilla Wilcox, curator of education

The gardens near the greenhouse were designed in 1917, with planting beginning during the winter of 1918. At that time hostilities were intense throughout Europe. The United States had officially been part of the conflict for almost a year, but travel and commerce between the U. S. and European countries had been disrupted for several years before that. Throughout the escalation of the war in Europe, however, U. S. companies had tried to maintain neutral shipping trade with the countries that were at war, particularly with England; President Woodrow Wilson had proclaimed this policy in 1914. Meanwhile, the German government was attempting to halt all trade between the U. S. and European countries

1915

through various threats and actions, including the sinking of the British passenger ship *The Lusitania* on May 7, 1915 upon its return to England from America. Within a year following the sinking of *The Lusitania*, the effects of war in Europe had reached far into the U. S. economy.

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Thomas Sears presented the final drawings for the formal garden to Mrs. Reynolds in the fall of 1917. This photograph shows the East Rose Garden under construction.

The war comes close to home: Robert Conrad joins the Marines

Construction activities at Reynolda were undoubtedly affected directly and indirectly by the war in Europe, but planting around the grounds seems to have proceeded more or less on schedule through the winter of 1917-18. Mrs. Reynolds wrote to Thomas Sears in late winter 1918, describing landscaping activities at Reynolda. She said, "Robert [Conrad, landscape supervisor] advises me that he now has almost all of them [bulbs] in. He has also nearly completed the placing of all the trees, shrubbery etc. that were left over."

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THE GARDEN IN WARTIME

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Plant trade effects

The interruption of intercontinental commerce affected many industries, including the nursery industry. The introduction to the *Dreer Garden Book for 1916*, the catalog for the seed and plant company that supplied many garden plants for Reynolda, included this statement:

1916

"As is well known, some varieties of both Vegetable and Flower seeds have to be imported from Europe,

which, owing to the present unfortunate war, renders it extremely difficult for those left on the seed-growing farms to properly harvest and prepare the seeds for shipment. The embargo placed upon exports from some of the countries and the meager and uncertain transportation facilities add to the difficulties. Nevertheless, we hope to receive our supplies in due course, although some items may be late in arriving."

In the winter of 1917, the German government proclaimed that all trade between the U. S. and

1917

Europe would cease, subsequently ordering the sinking of hundreds of ships during the spring of

1918 and effectively cutting off long-established shipping lanes.

Building material delivery effects

Shipments of construction materials within the U.S. were also disrupted. Letters between Mrs. Reynolds, Thomas Sears, and a slate supplier illustrate the complexity of the problems this disruption presented. Mr. Sears ordered Vermont slate for walks and seats from the John D. Emack Company in Philadelphia during the winter of 1917. The order was prepared, but the company was unable to send it out because of a shipping embargo. Thomas Sears suggested to Mrs. Reynolds that she, "through R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., might be able to get a permit to obtain a [railroad] car for shipment.... As I understand it, the embargo is only a temporary

one, but even so, may last several weeks.

Considering that freight shipment is slow at present, it seems to me wise to get the slate under way at the earliest possible time."

Mrs. Reynolds replied, "...I would not like to take any action in the matter in an effort to push it through earlier than Emack and Co. themselves can do, for with the food situation in the east in the condition it is, this being something that I can do without, I do not feel that I have a right to push the matter, but as the Emack Co., in all probability, are dependent upon the sale of a certain amount of this stone, I feel sure that I can leave the matter in their hands to get it to me as early as possible."

1918

The delay apparently caused a difficulty for the Emack Company. In a May 20, 1918 letter and bill from

the company to Mrs. Reynolds, H. D. Emack wrote: "As advised you previously, we were compelled to carry this material in stock for your order some four months before making shipment on account of an embargo existing so that in reality we have been out of the use of our money for about six months."

By 1918 the nursery industry appears to have made some recovery from earlier difficulties. A series of invoices for plants for the Reynolds' gardens dated April, May, and June of 1918 show that at least some of the plants and seeds needed for the garden were available and had been received by that time. Because these are the only invoices available, it is not known whether or not they represented the only plants that were received that spring. ☺

ROBERT CONRAD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In the spring of 1918 plants named on the September 1917 plans were beginning to arrive. In April and May of 1918, Robert Conrad initialed invoices from Dreer, Cottage Gardens Company, and Bay State Nurseries confirming receipt of many of the plants for the formal garden. By the end of that spring, Robert Conrad had joined the Marine Corps. His absence was deeply felt by those left behind. Correspondence concerning a keepsake gift sent to him by Mrs. Reynolds told of Mr. Conrad's love of Reynolda and the gardens and of the affection felt for him by Mrs. Reynolds and others at Reynolda.

*My dear Mrs. Reynolds,
I feel, in justice to Robert, I should write and explain to you why you have not heard from him. He, with the other recruits, are being held in quarantine for two weeks before they are allowed to go in with the regular troops, and they can not give a definite address until they are out of quarantine. I can hardly wait to hear from him. I am so anxious to send him the beautiful wrist watch you sent him, and know it will make him happier than anything else could possibly have done.... I went with Robert out to Reynolda the afternoon before he left but have almost wished since I had not, it was real pathetic to see him going from one place to another stopping over different plants and flower beds for the longest time and when we came away he said 'I love Reynolda'....*

—Mr. W. Conrad, June 1918

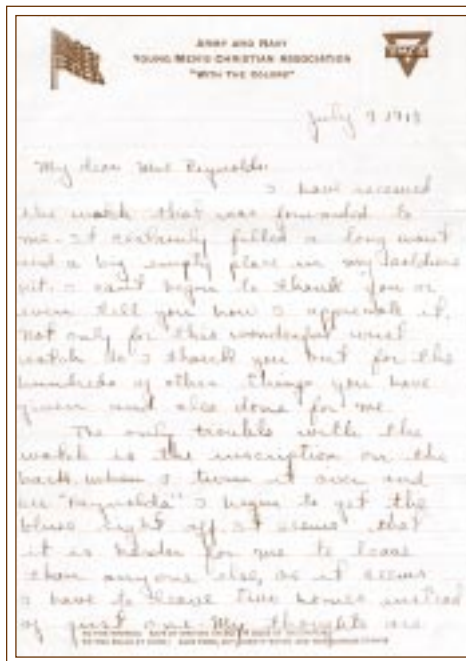
*My dear Mrs. Reynolds:
...The only trouble with the watch is the inscription on the back. When I turn it over and see 'Reynolda' I begin to get the blues right off. It seems that it is harder for me to leave than anyone else, as it seems I have to leave two homes instead of just one. My thoughts are always drifting back to Reynolda and I look forward to the day that I might again resume relationship there....*

**—Private Robert C. Conrad
187 Co. Marine Barracks
Parris Island, S.C.
July 7, 1918**

*My dear Robert:
...They are writing me daily how much they miss you at home, and I want you to know that we are simply holding the place open until you come back. We are not going to get any one in your place even temporarily. I was delighted to have you say that the inscription on the back made you homesick and I trust you will always feel this way, for I want you to look upon 'Reynolda' as your second home....*

**—Katharine S. Reynolds,
writing from Jefferson
Hospital in Philadelphia
where Mr. Reynolds was
undergoing treatment.
July 18, 1918**

Robert Conrad's love of Reynolda began when, as a boy, he pedaled his bicycle to the greenhouses to help out in the afternoons. When he returned to Reynolda after his duties in the Marine Corps ended, Mr. Conrad resumed his position at Reynolda, where he remained for over fifty years. 🍷



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Plants for collectors: Hens-and-chicks

by Preston Stockton, *director*

One of my favorite springtime stops is Jones Nursery in Advance, a wonderful perennial and tree nursery owned by Mary Nell and Leonard Jones. It is a tradition that I go with friends on Good Friday. There are beautiful display gardens at the nursery, and I have admired the nice selection of sedums that Mary Nell has collected. Mary Nell suggested that I get a catalog from Squaw Mountain Gardens, a nursery in Estacada, Oregon that offers quite a number of sedums.

I promptly ordered the catalog, and soon it arrived. That night I crawled into bed with pen in hand to select the sedums that I had to have. But I soon realized that it was not the sedums that interested me but the pages of *Sempervivum*. You know them—they're those fleshy little plants made up of rosettes and babies. I grew up calling them hens-and-chicks. This catalog has twenty-two pages of hens-and-chicks, over 600 different varieties. Over the years I have collected several varieties for my own garden and thought that they were pretty neat, but I certainly did not realize how many different varieties there were. With this catalog I was in the big leagues.



The next time I visited Jones Nursery, Mary Nell told me that she and Leonard had gone to Oregon for a conference and had visited Squaw Mountain Gardens. Big mistake, she said. By the time they left, they had selected over a hundred varieties of *Sempervivums* to ship back home. I looked at all her new ones and had to have some. I couldn't wait until next year when she would have some to sell; as a true gardener I have to have them NOW. Back to the catalog.

One thing I learned very early is that this is a very confusing genus. There are over forty species native to Europe, North Africa, and western Asia. I tend to be a nut over botanical names, but these plants have no morals and hybridize so freely, even in the wild, that you might as well throw the nomenclature out the window and just grow the ones you like. Don't worry about their botanical names, but concentrate instead on the wonderful cultivar names such as 'Raven', a red so deep that it is almost black. Or 'Stuffed Olive', which has a bright green center with red outer leaves and red chicks. I like 'Unicorn', a very large plant that wants to be sure its babies live in another neighborhood as it shoots them way out on long red stolons. My favorite—today, is 'Starshine', which is incredibly beautiful in August when it turns from green to a luscious apricot color.





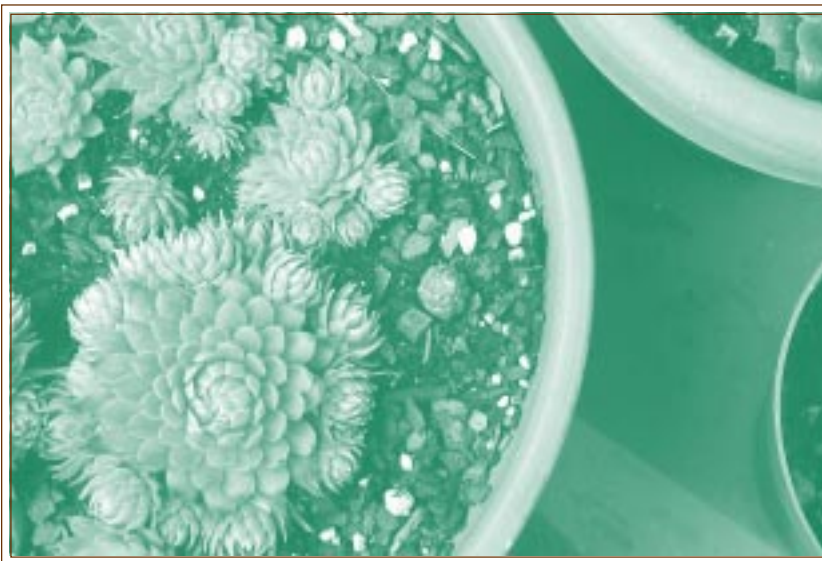
and crevices because they are very tough and can grow in very little soil. The only thing I have found is that they have to have good drainage and plenty of sun. They also like a little lime every year. They do bloom, but the flowers are not produced in abundance. None of my plants have

The *Jovibarba* group are known as the “rollers.” The colorful chicks sit on top of the mother plant and as both grow the chick becomes detached and rolls off to grow wherever it lands, often fairly far away. The *tectorum* species is known throughout Europe as the “house leek,” so called because they were attached to roofs of houses to protect them from storms, lightning, fire, witches, and I guess, general pestilence. (Maybe we should try using them on the N.C. coast.) They were also used to treat warts and burns. What a great plant.

They really are great to use in walls, cracks,

ever bloomed, of course, but several that I have shared with my brother bloomed this summer. The flowers are beautiful and very colorful in pink, white, yellow, or purple. Unfortunately, the plant that blooms will die, but don't fret, there are plenty more to take its place.

I did finally get my order placed to Squaw Mountain this summer. It took quite a while to whittle down my list to a manageable number. The plants are all potted and growing nicely on my deck. Friends and family often comment on them—one friend says it looks like a little commune out there. I think I really like them because, in the great tradition of Southern gardening, it gives me just one more plant to share. 🍀



Sempervivums thrive in pots even with very little care.

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 Mrs. Sophia S. Cody
 Dr. Robert S. Jeffords Sr.
 Harriet Weiler

Memorials

In memory of:

Jake Yokely by Martha Mitchell
 Mrs. Frances Sutton Logan by Helene
 H. and Alfred J. Ruffy Jr.
 Mrs. Henry Valk Sr. by Frank H. Hanes
 Charitable Trust
 Edgar Lowrance by Beverly J. West
 Archie K. Davis by Mr. and Mrs. H. C.
 Roemer
 Mrs. Edna Baker by Lauren, Collett,
 Kathryn, and Compton Thach
 Mrs. Ellen Wellman by Dogwood
 Garden Club
 Dr. Walter Flory by
 Pat Lackey
 Charles M. Frost
 Mr. and Mrs. William Dixon Jr. and
 Mr. Smith by April Marshall
 Julia Lambeth by
 Molly W. Johnson
 Alyson Warner Barnard
 Frances L. Reynolds
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert D. Shore
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"SUBTERRANEAN TREASURE" — SWEET POTATOES

by Seth Krautwurst, *horticulturist*

Buried treasure lies just beneath the surface of the ground in the vegetable garden at Reynolda, treasure so anxious to be found that it occasionally heaves itself toward the surface from its subterranean home. For most of the growing season the treasure lies under a thick, lush, tropical-appearing growth of vines that conceals its true identity to all but those who hold the knowledge of this food crop, one that has been grown for countless centuries in the ancient civilizations of Central and South America and still is grown throughout the temperate regions of the world to the present day. But enough mystery. The sweet potato, *Ipomoea batatas*, willingly shares its sugary, nutritious riches with those who take a little care in providing for its needs, and sometimes with other opportunistic inhabitants of the garden as well.

The genus *Ipomoea* contains many familiar garden plants such as morning glory, moon vine, cypress vine, and cardinal climber. Worldwide there are 450-500 species of *Ipomoea*. We will focus on the species *Ipomoea batatas*, the sweet potato. Sweet potatoes belong to the morning glory family, *Convolvulaceae*. The plant is a tropical perennial that is grown as an annual in temperate regions. The most probable point of origin for the sweet potato is Central or South America.



Evidence of rodent damage.

Culture

Sweet potatoes require a rather long frost-free growing season. Most cultivars need 120-150 days to reach maturity, but some are ready in as little as ninety days. The average temperature during the season should be a minimum of 77 degrees F. Plants need about an inch per week of rain. Ideal soil pH is 5.8 to 6.2, but sweet potatoes will grow at a pH between 4.5 and 7.5. Well-drained sandy loam is best for sweet potatoes; however, sweet potatoes grow well in many soils and don't require a particularly rich garden soil (that is, one high in organic matter). The sweet potato plant appreciates the addition of significant amounts of potassium and a little boron. Granite dust, available at your local quarry at about \$10.00 per pickup truck load, is a good source of potassium. It should be applied at a rate of twenty-five pounds for every 1,000 square feet. The amount of boron needed is very small—add only two ounces of Borax per 1,000 square feet in boron-deficient soils. Plants require only moderate amounts of nitrogen and phosphorous. The addition of an inch or so of compost is also recommended.

Cultivars

There are many cultivars of sweet potato from which to choose. This past season we grew 'Vardaman' and 'Beauregard'. 'Beauregard', in general, outperformed 'Vardaman' for us. Some others that you may want to try are 'Jewel' (the industry standard), 'Hernandez', 'Resisto', 'Jasper', 'Excel', and 'Centennial'. Try to choose varieties that are resistant to insects and disease, as all of these are.

Sweet potatoes should be planted well after the last frost, when the soil has warmed up to around 65 degrees F. Purchase only certified disease-free slips in order to avoid problems with a number of fungal diseases. Place your sweet potato patch in a sunny area where no sweet potatoes have been grown in the last three years or so. To provide drainage, it is a good idea to plant sweet potatoes in soil that has been formed into ridges six to ten inches high and eighteen to twenty-four inches

wide. Space these ridges thirty-two to forty-two inches apart, and plant your slips in the middle of the ridge four inches deep and twelve to fifteen inches apart. Allow plenty of room for the vines to spread out. Sweet potato plants need even watering to do well. Evenly moist soil is the key here, not too much or too little. Eventually the vines will cover the entire area and form a living mulch. Until this occurs, some weeding may be needed, but once established there is little to do but water and wait.

The reward

Harvest should take place after the maturity date has been reached (90-120 days depending on the cultivar) and before a killing frost sets in. A light frost usually doesn't harm sweet potatoes, provided the soil temperature does not fall to 50-55 degrees F for several days. These temperatures can cause the sweet potato to rot not only in the ground but also during subsequent storage. You can simply dig out a few representative tubers to gauge the readiness of your patch. Cut back the vines in small bundles and remove them to the compost pile. Dig down the rows with a shovel, carefully lifting out your treasure. Handle the sweet potatoes with care (you may even consider wearing a pair of cotton gloves) as they are tender and prone to damage which, again, affects their ability to be stored.

Sweet potatoes should be cured immediately following harvest at a temperature of about 85 degrees F and 85-90 percent relative humidity somewhere out of the sunlight for about a week. Store at 55-60 degrees F. Sweet potatoes can be stored for up to ten months.

Problems

Our sweet potato patch produced some impressive football-sized tubers this year, but we were somewhat disappointed in overall production. In retrospect, we have determined that the problem was most likely caused by irregular watering, more specifically over-watering. This led to some souring and rot on the tubers. Cracks were present on part of our crop and, while not particularly attractive, they posed no problem insofar as edibility and storage were concerned. There were also a number

The meadow vole is probably the most numerous rodent of the Piedmont. It enjoys low moist areas with thick vegetation (sound familiar?) and nests either above or below ground, feeding on grass, seeds, roots, bark, and evidently sweet potato. The meadow vole is about twice the size of a regular mouse and is found everywhere in North America from Mexico to the Arctic. They are active day and night. Meadow voles live one to three years in the wild and have a high reproductive capability (potentially as many as 126 offspring per year). This abundance makes meadow voles an important prey species for many predators including owls, snakes, foxes, hawks, and weasels. Encouraging some of these predators to take up residence in the garden will help to keep these abundant rodents in check.

of pillbugs present on some of the tubers at the time of harvest. Whether the pillbugs initiated the damage they caused or were simply taking advantage of the soft tissue was not readily apparent. In either case it seemed likely that neither the rot nor pillbugs would have presented a problem had watering been more even. (Incidentally, pillbugs, or more correctly *isopods*, represent the largest group of terrestrial crustaceans.) We also found evidence of the presence of rodents in the form of gnawed tubers. The most likely culprit would appear to be the meadow vole *Microtus pennsylvanicus*.

The sweet potato is a wonderful plant with a rich history and a variety of uses. Some folks enjoy gathering the shoot tips of the vine and preparing them as you would spinach. Cuttings from the vines can be taken into the house and grown in water, producing lush foliage for the windowsill. Children marvel in wide-eyed amazement when cradling in their arms a sweet potato of sufficient size to almost topple them over backwards. The meadow vole, we can imagine, may be similarly pleased upon discovering the luscious root. And the owl silently swooping down on the vole surely must appreciate that it has been well-fed. With proper attention and a minimum of effort the sweet potato, the jewel of the earth, will yield its treasure to you and yours to enjoy. ☺

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SHE LOVES ME, SHE LOVES ME NOT...EVERYONE LOVES DAISIES IN THE GARDEN

by Kim Tilley, assistant director

No flowers in the garden are simpler, more cheerful than daisies, and no garden is complete without the color of yellow. So why not combine the two and enjoy the beauty and simplicity of the yellow daisy? To me, the sight of yellow daisies has the same effect as sheets air-dried on a warm spring day—clean, fresh, and begging to be smelled. Even the word daisy can give a lift to the heart.

All daisies belong to the family Compositae (also known as Asteraceae), so named because the blooms are composite, consisting of a crowd of small discoid (buttonlike) flowers surrounded by one or more layers of large petal-like rays. Because of this arrangement of rays, the flowers are actually held together in one blossom. Botanists consider composite blossoms among the most complicated of flower forms. The family Compositae also has the distinction of being one of the largest in the plant world, containing twelve to eighteen tribes, about 950 genera, and more than 20,000 species, including a host of well-loved garden favorites such as aster, chrysanthemum, calendula, cosmos, and achillea.

Members of the family Compositae range in size from the taller species, such as *Helianthus* (sunflower) and some varieties of *Rudbeckia* (black-eyed Susan), to medium-size plants like mums or asters, and shorter-size ones such as *Coreopsis* and *Calendula* for the front of flower gardens. They demand very little, being hardy to our clay soils, disease-free, not brutally invasive, and seldom in need of staking except for the taller growing varieties of *Helianthus* which can reach a height of six to eight feet or more. Division may be necessary after three years or so with some such as *Rudbeckia* and *Coreopsis*. They like a neutral soil, a sunny spot with some elbow room, and some moisture to keep plants healthy. Many carry that most comforting label, "long-lived perennial."

Given so many virtues, it's easy to understand why daisy flowers have found their way into almost every garden. Even the big yellow daisies have found their way back into American gardens. Their previous neglect was due to their large size and also being defined as coarse by landscape designers. Now flower beds are no longer your typical two- to three-foot wide, where one plant height pretty much did it. Thankfully, the American flower bed has become deep enough to accommodate a variety of plant sizes. With my own style of gardening, I believe that growing a lot of flowers is certainly more pleasing than growing a few.

The back of the border

So our flower beds are widening to six, ten, maybe even twelve feet deep. With flower beds this large the question is, what to put at the back? What is tall enough to be seen and textured enough to give weight? One answer is the larger yellow daisy plants, the ones that have been growing behind barns and in roadside ditches for years, the large perennial *Helianthus*.

☉ *Helianthus x multiflorus* 'Flore Pleno'

This is one of the most common cultivars, a bushy plant needing about three feet of growing space. In summer it produces a mass of bright yellow flowers that resemble shaggy double chrysanthemums. At Reynolda, this plant grows in the newly restored Blue and Yellow Garden.

☉ *Helianthus angustifolius*

With our fall season long and sunny, this graceful, very tall plant with narrow leaves is a winner. This species will require watering during dry summers. Late in the season, seldom before September, the buds on the slender branches of the upper part of the plant erupt into a shower of two and one-half inch, yellow daisy flowers. One plant of each variety is enough for a garden of average size. Staking may be needed. Divide only when performance deteriorates, usually every third or fourth year.

Midway

For the middle of the flower garden the list of plant choice is endless. You can choose from asters, chrysanthemums, sneezeweed, nippon daisy, cosmos, and black-eyed Susan, just to name a few. If the garden is only four to six feet deep, these can also be used as back of the border plants.

☺ *Chrysanthemum* 'Statesman'

This is a yellow, late-blooming pompom producing long-lasting terminal sprays, coming into full bloom with a burst of color mid- to late-October. For a formal look, this mum is worth using, but it may need staking. This old cultivar grows in the Blue and Yellow Garden.

☺ *Helenium hoopesii*

Sneezeweed, another noteworthy plant in the Blue and Yellow Garden, is a sturdy, perennial plant with rays that curve down away from the domed disc as they age. It has lance-shaped leaves, each with a prominent pair of wings at its base. Atop each stem is a branching inflorescence of clear yellow flowers.

☺ *Cosmos*

This is an annual plant that is good to fill in perennial gardens for continual blooming throughout the summer and fall. It comes in many shades of yellow, red, and orange flowers that are usually about two inches across. The foliage is airy but bushy, and plants bloom profusely. Self-seeding is possible, but it's best to direct-sow yearly. We often grow cosmos in rows in the vegetable garden.

☺ *Rudbeckia newmanii* and *R. sullivantii*

'Goldsturm' (sometimes called 'Goldstrum') These cheerful, bright flowers are among the easiest to grow. The common black-eyed Susan is the most familiar one, but many garden hybrids are available. Most bloom from mid- to late-summer until late fall, a time when it is hard to find color for the garden. These vigorous plants form clumps that are best divided every few years. They are not fussy about soil, and most grow best in full sun.

The front of the garden

When designing the front of flower gardens, it's necessary to use smaller plants that don't hide the second or middle layer of plantings. These are a few plants of choice that are in keeping the yellow daisy theme.

☺ *Coreopsis verticillata* 'Zagreb' and 'Moonbeam'

These summer-blooming plants usually look like slightly ragged, yellowish daisies. I like them because they are easy to grow and have a fairly long flowering period. 'Moonbeam' is one foot tall, with pale yellow flowers that fit wonderfully in gardens where a strong yellow would be too much. 'Zagreb' is eighteen inches tall or less, with brighter yellow flowers.

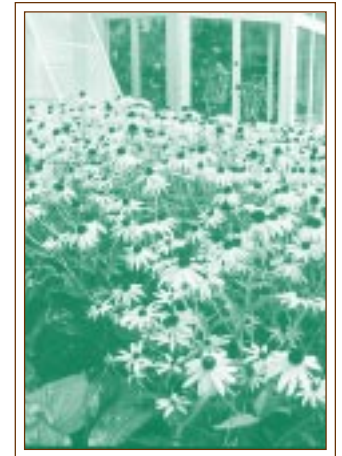
☺ *Gaillardia anistata* 'Dazzler'

Gaillardia flowers look like large daisies with bold, bright markings like those of a Native American blanket, in patterns of red, yellow, and gold. Most grow about two and one-half feet tall, but there are also dwarf varieties. They bloom in summer over a long period and are a good choice for our hot climate.

☺ *Calendula officinalis*

The old common name is pot marigold. Many varieties of this plant are available, but usually by seed only. I would not have a spring or fall garden without this splendid plant. I like it for its intense shades of orange and yellow and because it is long-blooming, continuing to flower even after frost. I plant my first crop of calendulas in early spring and another in August for the fall garden. They are easy to grow from seed. They like cool days, full sun, and fertile soil.

The gardener who comes to grow these plants will quickly learn their personalities and special charms. There is nothing like them to get the gardener through the doldrums of late summer or to keep the garden showy between the first bloom of spring and the final show of fall foliage and asters. I would hardly be without one and am always on the lookout for others. To see any of the mentioned plants feel free to walk the gardens of Reynolda and spot the many varieties of Composites, so cheerfully named the daisy. ☺



Black-eyed Susans next to the greenhouse bloom in August.



Gaillardia anistata 'Dazzler'



Helen Mockov and Joe Boroff are two of the volunteers who help maintain the vegetable gardens.

Preservation of hardscape features continues

by John Kiger, *buildings superintendent*

What is landscaping? Most of us would agree that it is a way to bring beauty to an area using various plants of different color, texture and size; however, a landscape is not limited to just the plantings. When Thomas Sears designed Reynolda's gardens, he incorporated distinct bed designs in the formal gardens and strategically placed eight shelters, two water features, two large pergolas, and slate walkways. All of these structures, referred to as the hardscape, are intended to enhance the beauty of the gardens and lead visitors in and around plantings.

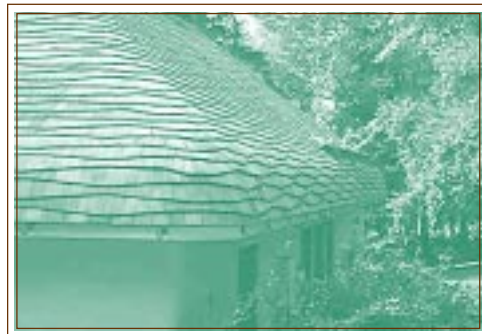
The Play House

The Play House is an important feature of the Reynolda Gardens hardscape. Located on the east side of the All-America Selections Rose Garden, it was originally used as a playhouse by the Reynolds children. In 1920 the architect for the building, Charles Barton Keen, designed a detailed roof line comprised of cedar shingles laid in a serpentine fashion to enhance the beauty of this cozy bungalow. This style of roof was used in the early 1900s, and its design was intended to resemble that of a thatch roof.



Restoration of the Play House roof

The roof on the building was showing signs of deterioration, and we knew that it would soon need to be replaced. Qualified roofers inspecting the roof found that the shakes themselves were in relatively good condition, but the nails were



Play House roof before and after restoration.

beginning to deteriorate, causing shingles to loosen and fall off. We called several roofing companies to give estimates on replacing the roof, but due to the way it was designed most would not attempt to duplicate it, citing that it was too labor intensive.

Thomas Houck, owner/operator of Thomas Houck Roofers, was the contractor who took on the job. He enjoys the challenge of working with such an unusual roof. Mr. Houck has owned his own business, located in Clemmons, North Carolina, for thirty-two years. He employs four highly skilled individuals whose attention to detail is outstanding. They are Larry Fuller of Ronda, N.C.; Larry Street of Advance, N.C.; Robert Rothrock of Clemmons, N. C.; and J. D. Harris of Winston-Salem.

Before removal of the roof began, a template was made of the existing shingle pattern so it could be replaced exactly as it came off. It is noteworthy to mention that this will be the third roof for this structure. The first was installed in 1920, when the building was constructed. The second, built according to a template that was made before the first roof was removed, was installed in the early 1970s. With the correct dimensions determined, the shingles were removed and the entire roof area was covered with thirty pound felt underlayment. An ice guard material was placed over the hip and ridge for added protection. Shingles are fire retardant, sawed, number-one

grade, cedar shakes. Since the hip and the ridge are rounded, some of the shakes were soaked in water for forty-eight hours prior to installation. Soaking the shakes allowed the material to become pliable enough to conform to the curvature of the hip and ridge without breaking. As installation progressed, onlookers gathered to admire the craftsmanship required to install such an intricate and time consuming design. Most observers probably didn't realize that each and every shingle had to be sawed to the correct angle.

With the new roof in place, the next step was to complete its return to the original appearance by staining the entire roof green. Color samples were obtained from the old roof and taken to ICI Dulux (formerly Glidden Paint), where specialists determined the proper color to use. They also recommended the use of an oil base, solid color stain for its durability. Once staining was complete, new five inch, sixteen ounce, half-round copper gutters and down spouts were installed.

Other hardscape projects completed

The renovation of the hardscape features in the formal gardens is now complete. The projects completed as of the fall of 1998 include:



Restoration of greenhouse door in progress.

- ☉ replacement and painting of the columns and arbor system that connects the three center shelters;
- ☉ repair of damaged woodwork, roof replacement, and painting of all eight shelters;
- ☉ replacement, repair, and painting of the woodwork on east and west greenhouse entrances;
- ☉ replacement and painting of all woodwork on the east pergola;
- ☉ repainting of the columns on the east and west pergolas;
- ☉ defining and edging of the pathway on the west side of the garden;
- ☉ upgrading of the signage at the entrances. ☉

Pick a color—any color—of coleus for the home and garden

by Tom Pratt, *greenhouse manager*

A brief quiz if I may: what plant group has opposite branching stems that are square, leaf margins that range the entire margin spectrum, and leaf colorations that seem endless? The genus *Coleus* fits all the descriptions above and more.

Originating from the warm climates of the old world, this tropical plant is uniquely known and valued for its colorful foliage rather than its less showy flowers. The leaves of one variety can lull you to sleep with a soft, smooth, velvet surface and quiet color; however, another variety will attack you with strange, crinkled textures and wild, striking colorations. With leaves in shades of pink, red, bronze, yellow, maroon, green, and chartreuse, no other plant can offer such foliar displays as the coleus.

In propagating coleus I have found cuttings to be much easier and results better than planting seeds. The tiny coleus seeds need a high temperature of 80 degrees to germinate and may take ten weeks to reach a transplantable size. Also, a side note: with seeds no two plants will look alike. By contrast, the cuttings that I have taken will often root in days instead of weeks and be true likenesses of their parents.



The coleus has come a long way in garden use since our parents used to plant them selectively in shadier spots of their gardens. Today there are "new and improved" varieties that bring coleus into a whole new light—full sun. Glasshouse Works, as well as other propagators, offer numerous varieties of coleus that do great in full sun. This year some of the upper garden here at Reynolda included designs of sun

CONTINUES ON PAGE 12

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A calendar of events is published separately in January and September.

Layout by David Fyten

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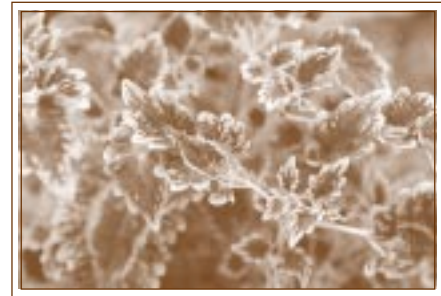
PICK A COLOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

coleus. Their growth and color were "stunning," as our garden visitors would tell us.

One of our new conservatory displays this year is a coleus collection. I chose six new coleus hybrids. Each, I feel, shows such vibrant color and variation that it is worthy of a visit. These hybrids are 'The Line', 'Big Red', 'Dark Star', 'Lemon Chiffon', 'Red Coat', and 'Beyond Avocado'. Because of the fact that these plants have done so well in our conservatory, I would recommend that you try them in your home. Coleus tends not to be so humidity-sensitive as other tropicals and should work well in a somewhat sunny room. Once a plant outgrows its space or becomes leggy, take a cutting and start anew.

As our interests grow each year to expand garden designs, let's remember the "ole" standby coleus. What better way to add arrays of color in the shade or sun? The cold winter blues may be with us now, but the colors of spring are only a choice away. ☺



TOP TO BOTTOM: the coleus collection in the conservatory; 'Red Coat'; 'Black Magic'.

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