



The Bloomin' News

Sandhills Community College

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The Sandhills Horticultural Society - dedicated to the support of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens since 1987. Please help the Gardens grow by becoming a Society member.

Garden Inspiration

Johanna Westmen

When asked to provide an article about a particular garden that has inspired me, it was a “no-brainer.” Every summer we take our Landscape Gardening

This is an older garden, developed by the Rosengarten family. There is a beautiful home, but even more beautiful, are the gardens. A staff of some of the most talented people I have ever encountered lovingly

flower colors surrounding it, or as magical as mulch laid out in a fleur de lis pattern.

When walking through this garden, be sure to take it slow so you can notice the fine details, such as pathways laid out in a radial pattern to mimic the sun’s rays. Following these pathways that can lead to areas of the garden that could easily be missed.

One particular garden, the Ruin Garden, is unlike anything I have ever seen. You must visit just so you can see the dining room table and the library. I won’t spoil it for you, in case you get a chance to visit and, for those who have been here, you know why I am recommending this area of the garden.

Not only do the gardeners tend the garden, during the winter they construct benches, gates and other beautiful pieces, which are utilized throughout the garden.

The Chanticleer Gardens have some of the most beautiful planting of astilbes I have ever seen and the woodland garden is beyond description. There is

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students on an annual field trip to various gardens. Even though I have personally attended this trip more than fifteen times, there is one particular garden that still evokes wonder and amazement every time I walk through it. The garden is Chanticleer Gardens in Wayne, Pennsylvania

tend the gardens. There are several gardeners who are in charge of specific areas of the garden. Each are allowed to let their creativity and imagination run free. The gardeners can bring artistic license to their area. Those touches can be as simple as a painted chair that matches the



even a garden where a particular agricultural crop is featured, such as corn or milo, but it is showcased in such a way that it plays beautifully into the artistry of this garden.

I once attended a seminar where the speaker said, “never underestimate the importance of art in a garden,” and this garden, in particular, has not underestimated art. If you are fortunate enough to visit the Chanticleer Gardens, be sure to take your time, walk slowly, and enjoy the artistic aspects of this garden.

Two years ago when I visited this garden, I notice two purple Adirondack chairs underneath a huge oak tree. Upon closer inspection, I noticed that there were faint pattern of leaves painted on to the chairs. One of our students pointed out that the leaf pattern was that of the leaves from the tree the chairs were underneath. I was so impressed that I came back to the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens and painted our conifer garden Adirondack chairs the

bright green they are today. We plan to place a leaf pattern on the chairs when things slow down a bit.

Just remember: take it slow — enjoy a garden.

Johanna Westmen

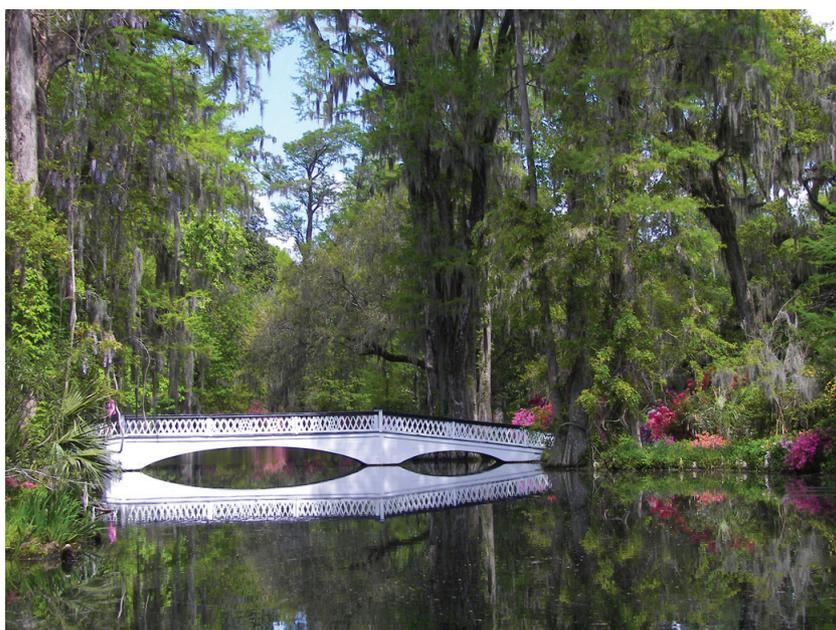


Garden Vistas

Lee Ivy

I'm a sucker for a good vista. When my wife and I travel she teases me about my affection for highway turnouts that offer grand views of whatever landscape is available at the time. As I travel around to various gardens, picturesque scenes often stop me in my tracks. If a camera is handy, the view quickly comes into focus.

Most great vistas have a focal point. One example is the white bridge at Magnolia Plantation and Gardens in Charleston, South Carolina. The swamp there is filled with Cypress, Spanish Moss and, of course, alligators. The romantic side of me is stirred with visions of those closest to me enjoying a relaxing afternoon perusing the grounds.



If you're in Kennett's Square, Pennsylvania

, a visit to Longwood Gardens is a absolute must. One of my favorite vistas is from the Bell Tower area overlooking some of the fountains. The torrent from the “Eye of Water” helps to settle my thoughts on busy days, inspiring me to reflect on the beauty of the vast array of plants. I also appreciate the view from the house through the majestic Poplars, Ginkgos and Beech trees.

As the first president of a new republic, George Washington

must have had many trying days, filled with weighty decisions and the clamors of populists, each vying for attention. I imagine, as he looked out from his front porch over the Potomac River, that his mind was redirected to a calmer state of tranquility. The vast lawn that gives way to a “Ha-Ha” wall and sheep grazing is

a vista sure to have helped him keep his wits about him.

Thomas Jefferson is another president who knew a good vista when he saw it. The view at Monticello from the vegetable garden over the orchard with an equally-impressive view of the Southwest Mountains, is breathtaking. Monticello means “little mountain.” A view of that little mountain, another picturesque vista, inspires even deeper breathing.

While teaching at Sandhills, I've been afforded the opportunity to travel to these great gardens, to these magnificent estates and to many other places that, for me, became precious personal Kodak moments. I'm thankful for those moments of soul-stirring refreshment, each one a gift of vision and vistas that inspired realization and relaxation.

What's YOUR Favorite ?

Dee Johnson

How many times have you been asked, “What’s your favorite…” in reference to food, color, etc.? My answer? That’s easy: “Italian and pink.” But when you ask me what my favorite plant or favorite garden is, the answers get more complicated.

I have several “favorite” plants, but I’ve managed to narrow my choice of favorite gardens down to two. My choices for this category are based on the outdoor rooms the designers created and on the designers themselves. In my case, both of my favorites were designed by women at a time when women didn’t always work outside of the home.

The first garden is **Sissinghurst** in Kent, England, designed by **Vita Sackville-West**, a writer by trade, who learned her gardening skills by reading, questioning, and experimenting. Sissinghurst has “successions” of landscaped rooms, making the garden appear much



larger than they really are, which allows greater privacy to everyone once they enter the garden. Sackville-West painted primarily in a one-color palette in her “rooms,” such as her famous white garden and lesser-known purple border. A formal herb and rose garden are part of her unique design, with fruit and nut trees also incorporated into the garden. It’s a small garden—only six acres—and quite rural. And in a twist of fate that might prove surprising to men who pride themselves on their grilling prowess, experts often identify her design of outdoor living rooms as the inspiration for patios and barbeque areas that became the hallmark of modern America. She also had a strong influence on what we now call the natural garden.

My other favorite garden is **Dumbarton Oaks**, a city garden (as compared to the more rural Sissinghurst), or perhaps more accurately, a district garden. It’s in Washington, D.C., in Georgetown. Originally 53 acres, Dumbarton Oaks is now a paltry 16 acres, a product of Italian, French, and English influence. Its designer **Beatrix Farrand**, and owner **Mildred Bliss**, incorporated different “functions” in this design, and they amaze me every time I visit. There are places to sit and contemplate, places to grow vegetables, perennials and fruit trees, places to perform and watch plays, or places to just relax and/or swim. And since no garden would be complete without roses, Dumbarton has its share as well. On top of it all, there are beautiful pieces of statuary and fine examples of craftsmanship everywhere.

Like many designers bent on sharing their designs with appreciative admirers, designer Farrand—like Sackville-West—was a writer. Buoyed by the success of Dumbarton’s design, she penned a review and guidebook for it. Aptly named **Plant Book**, it includes her design intentions for Dumbarton and a plan for its maintenance upon completion. *Plant Book* is still used as a guide in maintaining Dumbarton, 70 years after it was written. For example, like Sissinghurst, Dumbarton Oaks has garden rooms, each with considerable privacy created by a clever use of barriers and transitions (every time I visit Dumbarton, my eye catches new details).

In my opinion the beauty and solitude these two gardens offer are unparalleled – and their designers’ influence on the American landscape is still evident today. A visit to either one of these wonderful gardens will leave you breathless...and appreciative.

An Inspirational Garden



Jim Westmen

- What an inspirational garden is depends on what inspires.
- The bounty of harvesting a prolific vegetable garden
- The exciting use of color and texture in interesting combinations
- The hope in planting a young tree with all the genetic potential it possesses
- The grace and movement of an ornamental grass in a gentle breeze
- The determination of a seedling to break through the soil and pop its head out
- The tranquil hammock hanging between two trees
- The soft light reflecting on a blue hosta leaf
- The strong visual impact of bright color
- The calming sound of a running waterfall
- The excitement of butterflies around a lantana in full bloom
- The splashing a bird makes in a bird bath
- The softness of a lambs ear leaf
- The joy of children exploring the natural garden
- The love the hummingbird has for the flower
- The unifying feeling you get in a garden
- The enjoyment of tasting that red ripe tomato
- The refreshing breeze across the back lawn
- The strength of a live oak trunk
- The satisfying richness of organic compost
- The artistic qualities of a nicely pruned topiary
- The cooling effect of a large shade tree
- The smell of freshly cut grass
- The inspiration that exists in the garden.....let it inspire you.



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Fall Gardening Tips

- ✿ Sparingly prune spring blooming shrubs to avoid sacrificing next years blooms.
- ✿ When bringing in your tropical interior plants lightly prune and clean up but avoid repotting.
- ✿ Plant fall veggies like broccoli, cabbage, onions, lettuce, and carrots.
- ✿ Plant pansies and bulbs for early spring color.
- ✿ Fall is a good time to fill in empty spaces or move existing perennials in your perennial border.
- ✿ Plant trees and shrubs during the fall months to take advantage of vigorous root growth patterns and winter rainfall.
- ✿ Clean leaves and debris from planting bed areas to prevent overwintering of diseases and insects.

Upcoming Events

September 26, 9 am: QIGONG AND TAI CHI in the gardens (Lee Holbrook, instructor). Learn about these two disciplines that benefit the mind and body, then stroll into the gardens to participate in an interactive class. Free for Horticultural Society members , \$5 for non-members. Call Tricia Mabe at 695-3882 to register.

October 12, 2-4 pm: GROWING DAYLILIES, a presentation by Noble Westen in SCC's Owens Auditorium. Free (sponsored by the Sandhills Horticultural Society and the Sandhills Council of Garden Clubs). Contact Tricia Mabe at 695-3882 for a reservation.

October 15, 8 am-12 noon FALL PLANT SALE (sponsored by the Sandhills Horticultural Society and the Student Horticulture Club) in the parking area to the left of Steed Hall. There will be a large variety of woody plants along with a nice selection of one-gallon perennials and ornamental grasses. Pansies and spring flowering bulbs also offered.

December 1, 10 am-12 noon: CREATING MAIL BOX AND DOOR ARRANGEMENTS using live greens, by Maggie Smith of Maggie's Farm. \$20 for Horticultural Society members, \$25 for non-members. Pre paid registration registered for the class. Call Tricia Mabe at 695-3882.