

# Legends and Legacies

## ASA/ARS Joint Convention April 20-24, 2016 Williamsburg, Virginia

By Richard (Rick) Bauer—Yorktown, Virginia & Don Hyatt—McLean, Virginia

The Mason-Dixon, Potomac Valley, and Middle Atlantic Chapters of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) and the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Azalea Society of America (ASA) welcome you to the Joint ASA/ARS Convention April 20-24, 2016, in the beautiful and historic city of Williamsburg, Virginia. Our theme is “Legends and Legacies,” and we hope to reflect on those who have enriched our lives and our gardens. The dates we have selected are at the opening of Historic Garden Week in Virginia, one of the most beautiful times of the year in the region. In most years, this time frame is when our native dogwoods (*Cornus florida*) are in bloom.

Our headquarters is the Fort Magruder Hotel and Conference Center, located just minutes from Colonial Williamsburg and the other Williamsburg attractions such as Busch Gardens. It is served by three airports, Richmond International (46 miles), Newport News-Williamsburg International (17 miles), and Norfolk International (42 miles). AMTRAK also serves Williamsburg with two trains daily, with the train station located two miles from the hotel. The Fort Magruder Hotel is steeped in history, and was actually built around the site of a Civil War fort. That area has been made into an attractive garden courtyard where people can relax, take a stroll, or learn about the historical past of the site. The hotel is offering a special \$119 convention rate which includes breakfast. This rate is valid from two days before the convention until two days after. Reservations may be made by calling 757-220-2250 or online at [www.fortmagruderhotel.com](http://www.fortmagruderhotel.com) using the convention code ASA.

In addition to the many activities offered at the convention, the Historic Triangle, consisting of Williamsburg, Yorktown, and Jamestown, offers a wide variety of activities from historical to recreational, as well as ample shopping opportunities. A brochure from the visitor's bureau is available on the convention web site on the Sightseeing page.

As part of the convention, we will be conducting a Flower Show and a Photography Show. More information on these shows will be available on the convention web site. Additionally, those interested may indicate their interest on the registration forms, and more information will be provided to them as it becomes available.

We have a full schedule of activities. Following are the planned events by day.

### Wednesday, April 20

The ARS and ASA Boards of Directors will be meeting this day. For those not involved in these meetings, Wednesday is open for convention arrival and registration and for local touring. We will be offering tours of the colonial area



▲ House of Burgesses - Colonial Williamsburg

▼ Fort Magruder Hotel



and region, provided by the company Colonial Connections. The tours offered will be:

1. A half-day tour of Colonial Williamsburg (this tour will require you to have transportation to the meeting point in the colonial area). This is a three-hour tour of the historic area of Williamsburg and includes a four-hour ticket to enter and visit all of the buildings in the historic area, a narrated walking tour, and all taxes and gratuities.
2. A five-hour tour of Jamestown, which includes transportation to and from the hotel, a 2½-hour guided walking tour at the Jamestown Settlement museum complex and a one-hour guided walking tour of historic Jamestown and the site of the original Fort James, built in 1607. Guides, admissions and gratuities are included.

3. A half-day tour to Berkeley and Shirley Plantations. Berkeley Plantation is Virginia's most historic plantation and the site of the first Thanksgiving in America. It was the home of Benjamin Harrison, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Its grounds include five terraces of restored English boxwood and flower gardens. Shirley Plantation is the oldest plantation in Virginia and the oldest family-owned business in North America. Visitors will be given a guided tour of the mansion and will have time to explore the grounds on their own. (Includes all admissions, guides, gratuities, and transportation to and from the hotel).

More information on these tours is available at the Tours tab on the convention web site.

Attendees are also encouraged to explore on their own using one of the package deals offered by Colonial Williamsburg or Busch Gardens or to take advantage of the numerous shopping opportunities at the outlet malls and other shops in the area. The hotel also sells tickets to Williamsburg attractions. More information will be available in your bags or by visiting the visitor's bureau web site link on the convention web page.

Our plant sale will also open for business. We have been busy propagating a wide variety of beautiful azalea and rhododendron cultivars and species with special emphasis on hybrids developed by Society hybridizers including Sandra McDonald, Bob Stewart, Joe Klimavicz, and Pete Vines. We will also have grafted and cutting-grown rhododendrons from many East Coast hybridizers.

Dinner will be on your own this evening. Attendees may take advantage of The Veranda Restaurant in the hotel, or any of the many restaurants in Williamsburg, including those on Merchant's Square next to the Colonial Area or in one of the historic restaurants located in Colonial Williamsburg.

We will have our official Welcome Meeting this evening. After covering all that will be offered during the convention, we will conduct a number of workshops on azaleas and rhododendrons.

## Thursday, April 21

Today we will be traveling west to Richmond to visit public and private gardens. After breakfast we will board our busses for the approximately one-hour trip to the following three gardens.

### Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

The Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond will be a featured attraction on this trip. It is ranked as one of the top public gardens in North America and has many wonderful floral displays that change with the seasons. It was voted second best public garden in North America by *USA Today* readers in 2014. This garden of more than 50 acres has a 63-foot classical domed conservatory, which is the only one of its kind in the mid-Atlantic. The garden also has more than a dozen themed gardens, including a Children's Garden, Rose Garden, Cherry Tree Walk, Healing Garden, and Fountain Garden. More information on the Ginter Garden is located in this Winter issue of *The Azalean*.

### The Cosby Garden

The Cosby garden in Rockville, Virginia, has an extensive and well-labeled collection of evergreen azaleas in a rural setting under tall trees. The garden was featured in an article in the Winter 2014 issue of *The Azalean*. Over the years, the Cosbys have planted hundreds of azaleas and rhododendron varieties on 11 of their 79 acres in Rockville, Virginia. Most recently they have started developing beds containing cultivars of Legacy hybridizers including **Sandra McDonald**, Pete Vines (Holly Springs), **Bob Stewart**, William "Bud" Claggett (Bowie Mill), **Joe Klimavicz**, Harry Weiskittel (Marshy Point), James Harris and Eugene Aromi.

The Cosbys have ensured that their beautiful property will be maintained and available to the public in the future by donating it to the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. It will be known as the Lewis Ginter Nature Reserve.

▼ Lewis Ginter Garden Conservatory



Photo Rick Bauer

▼ Teahouse in Liesfeld Garden



Photo Don Hyatt



## Liesfeld Garden

Also in Rockville is another garden site, the exquisite Japanese garden of Mrs. Junko Liesfeld, which includes wonderful artistry and traditional use of azaleas and other plant materials to enhance the water features and impressive stonework she designed.

Lunch will be on the bus traveling between Ginter Gardens and the Rockville gardens.

We will open the plant sale again after the tours. Dinner will again be on your own.

## Evening Program

**Plant Explorers: John Bartram and Steve Hootman.** This evening we will have an entertaining presentation by the early American botanist, John Bartram, as portrayed by Kirk Brown, President of the Garden Writers Association. He will be followed by one of our most celebrated modern plant explorers, Steve Hootman, Director of the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way, Washington.

## Friday, April 22

Friday morning we will head east to Norfolk and Carrollton to visit the Norfolk Botanical Garden and the private garden of Bill and Linda Pinkham.

## Pinkham Garden

The beautiful garden of Bill and Linda Pinkham sits on six waterfront acres of the James River. It features many large and interesting stones the Pinkhams have collected over the years. These are complemented by rare perennials, conifers, and other companion plants. The Pinkhams, former owners of Smithfield Gardens Nursery, started developing their garden in 1997. In addition to the beautiful plants and rocks, there are a number of interesting and unique sculptures done by Bill.

There are many different venues to enjoy, including a koi pond, a bog, two rock gardens, a flower border, a shade garden, a summer tropical garden, and a small oriental space.

Even though Bill and Linda both majored in horticulture with **Don Hyatt** at Virginia Tech (VT), Bill is the master



▲ Looking up the garden path in the Pinkham Garden.

▼ Looking toward the McDonald Hybrid beds through a sculpture in the Reflection Garden.



planner and Linda is the head weeder. Linda loves deciduous azaleas, especially the orange and yellow ones. She is currently collecting Aromi hybrids. Linda also collects and hybridizes daylilies and has registered four: 'VT Spirit', 'VT Purple Passion', 'The Purple Lady', and 'Smiley Face'.

Bill collects Japanese maples, hostas and conifers. He currently enjoys his ceramic hobby. He will have his studio open on the day of the tour.

## Norfolk Botanical Garden

The bulk of our time will be spent at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. This garden was originally named The Norfolk Azalea Garden and was originally built under a Works Progress Administration grant for the Azalea Garden Project in 1938. In 1939 the garden consisted of more than 4,000 azaleas, 2,000 rhododendrons and hundreds of other plants. While the garden had 175 acres at one time, the neighboring Norfolk International Airport took 20 acres of the garden



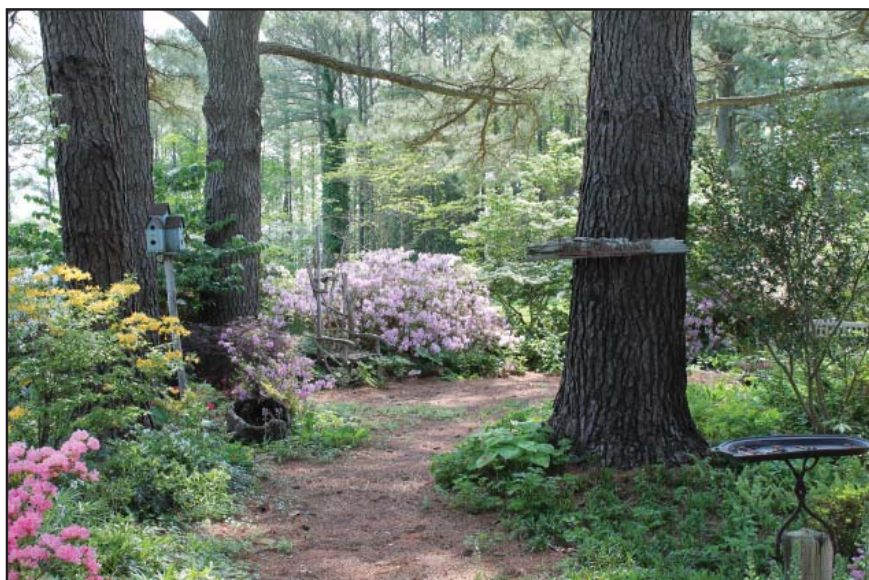


Photo Rick Bauer

▲ Garden path in the Williams Garden

▼ McDonald Azaleas in the Brant Garden



Photo Rick Bauer

during an expansion. (Those flying into Norfolk will be treated to an airport with a significant number of azaleas in its landscaping.) Today the garden consists of 155 acres with 12 miles of paved trails and 52 themed gardens that can be viewed by tram, boat or by foot. Themed gardens include the Hummingbird Garden, the Sarah Lee Baker Perennial Garden, the Virginia Native Plant Garden, and the Bicentennial Rose Garden. Each of these gardens allows guests to see a variety of plants – from the cultivated to the wild. During our visit, Lantern Asia will transform the Garden's landscape with works of art to mesmerize guests of all ages. An ancient tradition, which began more than 2,000 years ago in China, this exhibit has traveled to Beijing, Sydney, and Rotterdam.

Lunch will be at the picnic pavilion at Norfolk Botanical Gardens.

## ASA Banquet: Rick Lewandowski Speaker

When we return to our hotel in the afternoon, we will have the opportunity

to visit our plant sale before preparing for the ASA reception and banquet in the evening. The banquet will be held in the hotel's Richmond Hall. After the banquet and business meeting, attendees will have the opportunity to hear Friday's keynote speaker, Rick Lewandowski, the former Director of Mt. Cuba Center. He will discuss landscapes utilizing native azaleas and other native plants. Rick is now Director of the Shangri La Botanical Gardens in Texas.

## Saturday, April 23

Today we will travel to Gloucester to visit private gardens, some of which belong to Society members.

## Brent and Becky's Bulbs

Historic Gloucester has a number of attractions including the display garden of famous daffodil and bulb specialist Brent Heath, of Brent and Becky's Bulbs. Brent and Becky's was originally founded by Brent's grandfather and was later run by his parents as the Daffodil Mart. They have a number of garden rooms with a large variety of different cultivars, including azaleas and rhododendrons, which will provide design ideas for every gardener.

## Williams Garden

This garden is owned by Cam and Dean Williams, whose property was originally the Dunham Massey Farm. It sits on the North River. The home, built in 1845, and property were purchased by the Williams (only the fifth family to own the property) in 1986 and the home was extensively restored in 1990. In addition to the main house, the 50-acre farm includes a number of outbuildings including a sleeping porch at the river's edge, a smokehouse, and a deluxe outhouse that is also known as a "necessary," an exterior building that contains a tiled spa and showers where Cam can bathe her golden retrievers. Cam has developed a beautiful garden including shade and sun gardens, a kitchen herb garden, and a meditation garden. She also had a "ruin" built to be the centerpiece of her Secret Garden.



## Brant Garden

We will also visit the garden of native azalea enthusiasts and ASA and ARS members **Jim and Pam Brant**. Their garden, designed by George McLellan, sits on five acres of rolling woodland and contains a large number of native azaleas as well as a number of **Sandra McDonald** azalea varieties and other evergreen azaleas. These are complemented by a number of camellias and Japanese maples, and other flowering trees.

## Hall Garden

Very close to the Brant garden is the home and garden of former ARS Executive Director, Barbara Hall, and her husband Al. They have many choice azaleas, rhododendrons, wildflowers, and perennials, but also look for humorous sculptures and touches of whimsy throughout the landscape.

## Perrin Garden

The Perrin Garden, designed and developed by retired landscape designer, Sue Perrin, sits on the property known as Belle Terre. It was first established in 1959 when the house was built. Only the trees and some mature camellias remained when the Perrins commenced adding to and restoring the gardens in 2000. They have added a boxwood parterre at the entrance, as well as a small herb garden, pool garden and viburnum collection. Their design relies upon low-maintenance flowering shrubs, trees, and bulbs.

Lunch will be a box lunch at Gloucester's beautiful Beaverdam Park which is situated on the Beaverdam Lake. Attendees will also have the opportunity to walk along their nature trail.

## ARS Banquet:

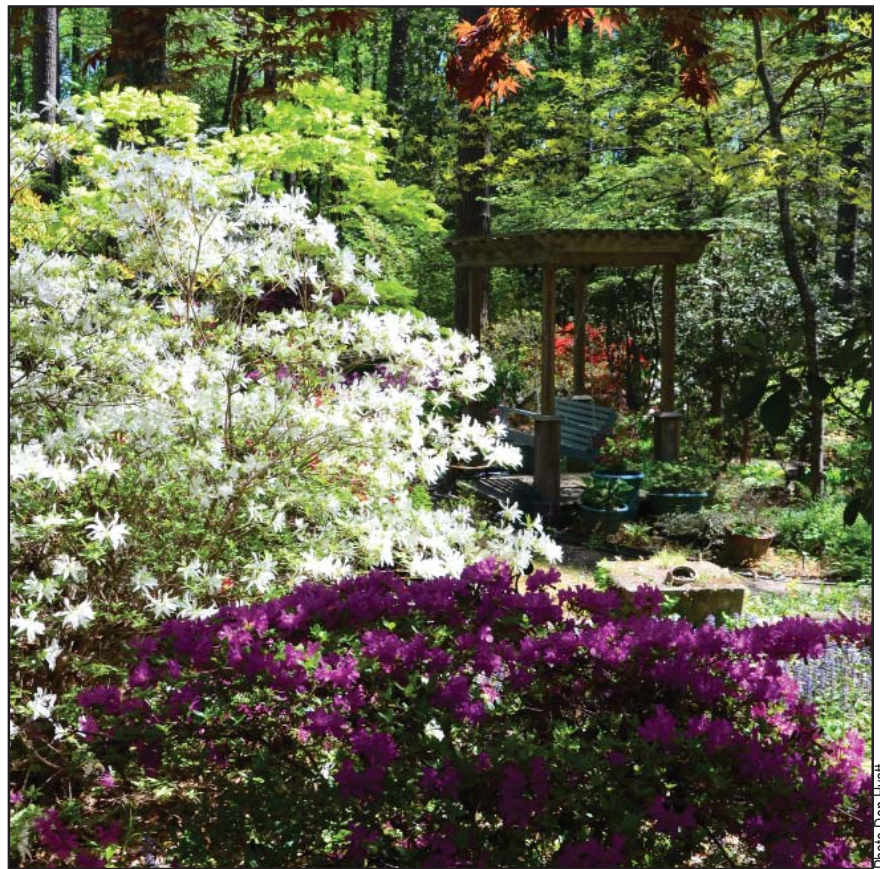
### Mike Stewart speaker

The evening's events will include the ARS reception, banquet, and annual meeting. Afterwards attendees will be treated to a presentation by our keynote speaker, Mike Stewart, past ARS President and noted nurseryman from Sandy, Oregon. He will share some of



▲ Belle Terre - Perrin Garden

▼ A serene spot in the Hall Garden



the contributions of legendary plant collectors and hybridizers, and their lasting legacies.

## Sunday, April 24

Sunday will be the departure day for many of our attendees. Others may opt to remain in Williamsburg for an additional couple of days and take advantage

of all of the opportunities the area offers. We will once again offer (subject to minimum participation levels) tours of the local area, departing in the afternoon. The tours offered will be a half-day tour of Colonial Williamsburg, and a half-day tour to Berkeley and Shirley Plantations, which are the same as those offered on Wednesday. We will also offer a full-day tour of Williamsburg and Jamestown. This tour will include a visit to the Jamestown Island Glasshouse, and a two-hour narrated and guided walking tour of Jamestown Settlement. After time for lunch (on your own) the tour will take you back to Williamsburg where you will have a 2½-hour narrated guided walking tour of the historic area followed by time to shop in Merchant's Square. Transportation, admission tickets, gratuities and taxes are included. Lunch is on your own.

We are looking forward to hosting the 2016 Joint ARS/ ASA Convention in Williamsburg, Virginia, and hope you are able to join us. For more up-to-date information, please refer to the convention web site <http://arsasaconvention2016.org/>.

**Richard (Rick) Bauer** is retired from the US Army and private industry and has been a member of the ASA since 2002. He is co-chair of the 2016 ASA-ARS Convention, an ASA Director and President of the Northern Virginia Chapter. He and his wife Susan live in Yorktown, Virginia, where they are expanding their azalea gardens with emphasis on Legacy hybrids (<http://www.nv-asa.org/legacies>).

**Don Hyatt**, co-chair of the 2016 ASA-ARS Convention, is a retired mathematics and computer science teacher who has had a lifelong interest in plants. He started gardening at the age of three at the family home in Northern Virginia where he still lives. He now focuses much of his attention on documenting and preserving wild populations of native azaleas, rhododendrons, and wildflowers.

## Nominees Selected for National ASA Board of Directors

Nothing is more important to the health and sustainability of the ASA than getting highly qualified, engaged, skilled, enthusiastic people to serve on the national board. As such, the Nominating Committee is pleased to put forward the following candidates for Director with terms expiring in 2018:

**Larry Miller** is a resident of Evansville, Indiana, where he grew up. He is a graduate of Hanover College with a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Business Administration. He served in the U.S. Army Infantry in Vietnam and lived for a while in Germany before taking over his family's business, Miller Block and Brick Company. In addition to his enthusiasm for azaleas going back to the 1970s, Larry enjoys playing music in a variety of styles and in a variety of bands, traveling to Europe, especially Germany, working on his rambling historic 1905 residence in Evansville and relaxing at his downtown condo in Asheville, North Carolina. Larry is a Purdue University Master Gardener, has been president of the Tri-State Chapter of the ASA, and a board member for 11 years.

**Jo Ann Smith** of Tyler, Texas, has been a member of the Texas chapter since 2006. She describes herself as a "passionate gardener." She has regularly attended ASA national conventions to learn more about using azaleas in both her home gardens and in the Ina Brundrett Tyler Community College (TJC) Garden that the 2007 Nacogdoches national ASA convention visited. She was vice president of the Texas Chapter from 2010-12 and president from 2012-13. During this time she helped arrange meetings at a wholesale nursery in Warren, Texas; a meeting at the field trials day at Overton, Texas; plantings of azaleas donated by member nurseryman **Bud Willis** from Louisiana at a

historic black cemetery in Nacogdoches, Texas; and a meeting at TJC to view improvements to the gardens and a planetarium event. She also led the effort to revise the chapter bylaws to align better with the ASA bylaws, which the chapter adopted. She conducted a statewide Texas membership survey that yielded a high member response. She also led the effort to raise funds for three memorial benches for the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden and the Gayla Mize Azalea Garden in honor of late Texas Chapter President **Mike Stump**, who helped revitalize the chapter in 2010. She is president of the Tyler Newcomers Garden Club, a member of the Arbor Foundation, and serves on Tyler's Spring Azalea Trail Committee.

**Chris Wetmore** has been the Central Carolinas Chapter president since the chapter was chartered in late 2013. Prior to that, he was a member of Vaseyi Chapter for almost two years. Chris and his wife Beth reside northwest of Charlotte, North Carolina, with their one-year-old son Clayton. They are expecting another addition to the family in mid-April. He has always been interested in plants but first became interested in azaleas when seeing wild flame azaleas in blooms on the grassy balds of southwest Virginia. Chris first learned of the ASA through J Jackson and Lindy Johnson after discovering their web site on native azaleas. After a couple years of exchanging emails and a visit to their nursery, Chris and Beth joined the ASA. Chris and Beth both attended their first convention in Asheville in 2012 and instantly became hooked. Chris has a history in banking and currently oversees operations at several high rise condo buildings in downtown Charlotte. Chris and Beth enjoy plants so much they have also recently started up a nursery that carries many southern favorites but focuses on deciduous and rare azaleas.