

## The Donation of Windrush

By John Monroe

The year 1961 marked the beginning of serious efforts to find an appropriate recipient for Windrush Plantation. The Burden Foundation was formed with a board composed of the family members: Ione, Steele, Pike and Pike's wife Jeannette. The primary purpose of the Burden Foundation was to act as a vehicle to make the donation. The Burden family gave the property to the foundation which in turn gave the property to Louisiana State University. This arrangement created an entity (The Burden Foundation) that would exist in perpetuity to oversee the use of the property and insure that the covenants of the donation were not violated. After five years of effort, evaluating alternatives and planning, in October of 1966, an agreement was reached to transfer Windrush to the Louisiana State University.

Louisiana State University was not the only organization being considered as the recipient of Windrush. From 1961 to 1966, several serious inquiries and discussions occurred with Governor John McKeithen; his executive secretary, Gus Weill and the Director of State Parks and Recreation Commission, Lamar Gibson, concerning the

possible use of Windrush as a state park. Gene Young, Superintendent of the Baton Rouge Recreation and Park Commission (BREC) made a proposal for East Baton Rouge Parish. Inquiries from the National Audubon Society, proposing a Community Nature Center, and the Radiation

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***"It's the serenity of the place that people who visit here find attractive."*** Steele Burden

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Center Committee of the East Baton Rouge Medical Society, looking for a site for the Center, were also received.

The family relied on several close advisors to help them find the best institution to receive the gift and set up the donation in the best way. Among these were Alvin Rubin, Luther Jordan, Norman Efferson and Johnny Cox.

Alvin Rubin was their lawyer. He wrote several drafts of donation document proposals during the intense three-year period from 1963 to 1966

during which time several possibilities were being considered. A listing of activities performed by him during that time documented nearly 100 separate conferences, research activities, drafts and other communications. Rubin was appointed a federal district court judge in August of 1966, only a few months before the donation of Windrush to LSU was finalized in October of that year; but he continued to be a trusted family advisor. Family legal activities were handed off to Bob Hawthorne. Bob is the current chairman of the Burden Foundation board.

Luther Jordan was the Burden family banker. The Burden Foundation trust was established with .....continued on page 5...



*Jeannette Burden and Ione Burden sign donation documents with LSU's Dean Norman Efferson, Board of Supervisor's Chairman Percy Roberts and LSU President John Hunter looking on.*

## Reflections from the Chair

By Ginnie Bolin, Chairman



After a very cold and wet winter, are you looking forward to fresh air, sunshine, and green landscape? The Burden Center is a good place to visit and enjoy nature at its best. The Burden Horticulture Society is gearing up for our Afternoon of Roses, on Sunday, April 18 from

2:00 to 4:00. The roses have been pruned, dead-headed, and dressed for the occasion and ready for everyone to experience the beautiful Burden All American Rose Garden.

The Trees and Trails are open now and being enjoyed by many visitors, some taking daily walks through the woods. Take this opportunity to watch a forest devastated by Gustav regenerate itself. The woods at Burden, thanks to the “help” of nature, will be a better forest than before the Gustav event.

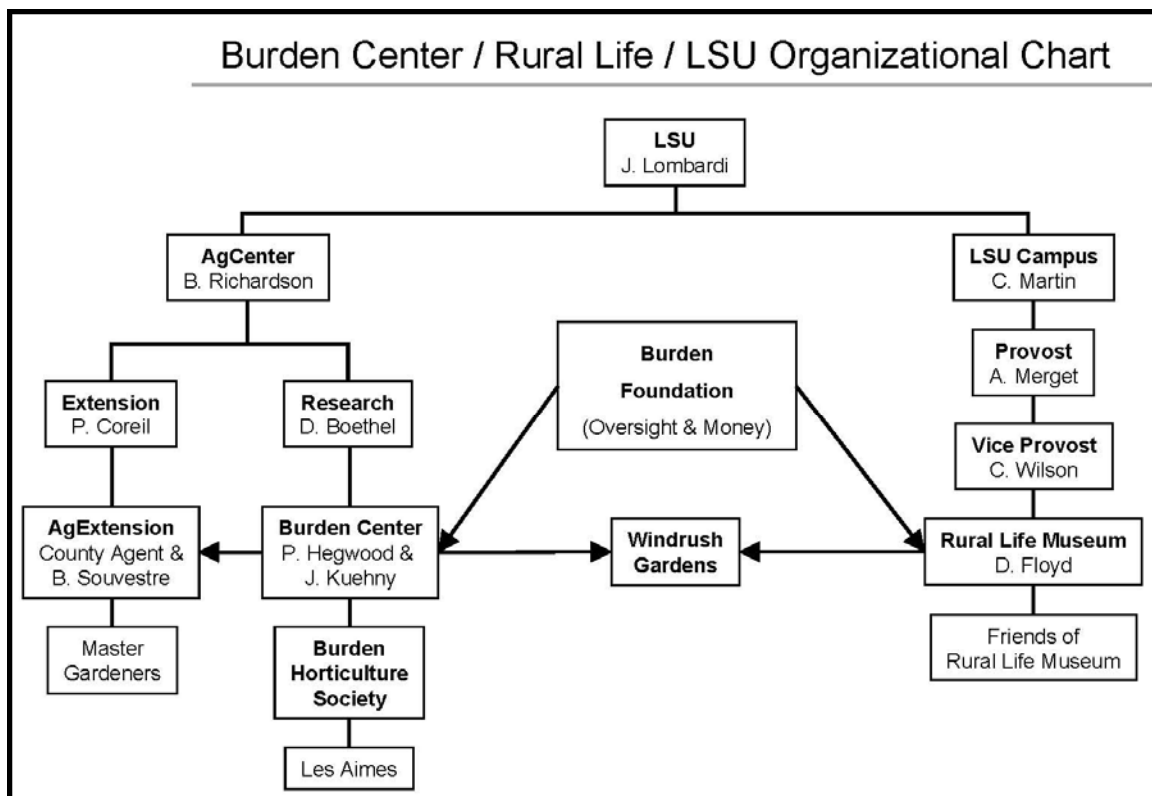
In January the first meeting of the BHS Board was an orientation for the four new Board members, the returning Board members, and the BHS Advisory Committee. John Monroe gave an overview of the history at the Burden Center and the donation of the Burden family to Louisiana State University. See John’s article on page 1 of this newsletter about the donation.

An organizational chart of the entire Burden facility which includes

Burden Center, Windrush Garden, and Rural Life Museum was presented to show the complex structure, relationships, and levels of responsibilities at the Center. Please refer to the chart for details.

Dr. Pat Hegwood and Dr. Jeff Kuehny did a thorough review of new Master Plan for Burden comparing the present map to the maps showing the new design concepts in the Master Plan. All of this information is available for review at the Burden Center or you can view the map of the Master Plan at our website, [www.burdenhorticulturesociety.com](http://www.burdenhorticulturesociety.com). Dr. Kuehny informed the Board that a feasibility study by a national firm is being considered before any capital campaign to raise money for the Master Plan would be undertaken.

The Board and the Advisory Committee are eagerly looking forward to an exciting and productive year. We invite you to be part of this adventure to transform Burden into a world-class research center and a university sponsored botanical garden. You can do this by renewing your membership or becoming a member of BHS by sending in the membership form in this issue of the newsletter.



## Digging in the Dirt

By Jeff Kuehny



### Lilting for Lilies

How often have you seen beautiful lilies in a flower arrangement and thought to yourself, “These lilies would look great in the landscape!”? Dream no more! Burden Center

has been conducting a lily perennialization study for landscape planting of some of the very same lilies that you see in flower arrangements with some great results.

Where do lilies come from and why should you consider them? Lilies are some of the oldest flowers in cultivation but have only been grown in the US for about 60 years. A tremendous amount of hybridizing of the different sections of lilies has been conducted since the end of World War II by the Dutch. During this time hybrid lilies have been grown primarily for cut flowers and as potted flowering plants with great success.

My earliest memories of lilies being grown in the landscape were from my childhood in Oklahoma. My grandmother grew these beautiful lilies with bright orange flowers sporting brown/black spots on the petals and she called them ‘Tiger Lilies’. As a pass-along-plant, my great aunt had a huge bed of these Tiger Lilies with what was probably a row of Stella d’Ora daylilies as a border in the front of the bed. This bed of lilies was a traffic stopper on Highway 11 in Deer Creek, Oklahoma! I believe these Tiger Lilies were *Lilium lancifolium*, native to Asia, an area from which many of the lilies we grow today are indigenous.

Three years ago Dr. Bill Miller, a colleague of mine and the bulb guru at Cornell University, engaged my curiosity about lilies once again. Burden Center was selected as one of many sites around the country to trial several different hybrids that may have landscape potential and which could possibly provide many years of flower power.

Five types of lilies were included in this study:

Asiatics – 3 to 4” flowers oriented upward or outward and with little or *no fragrance* in oranges, reds, yellows, pinks and whites;

Orientials – 6 to 8” flowers oriented horizontally with *strong fragrance* in reds, purples, pinks or whites;

LA Hybrids – *Lilium longiflorum* crossed with Asiatic types, flowers oriented upward;

OT – Oriental Trumpet or oriental types with downward facing flowers;

Longiflorum – standard Easter lily type.

See the list of types, cultivars and flower colors trialed at Burden Center in the table below.

Most hybrid lily bulbs are available for planting from February through May. Lily bulbs like most bulbs, like to be planted in a well drained soil with neutral pH. We planted them at Burden Center in April but these bulbs can be planted from February through April. The Oriental hybrids flowered the beginning of August with the remaining hybrids flowering earlier, approximately July 1 the first year of planting. The flowering dates the second and third year of the study were much earlier with the Asiatic and LA Hybrids blooming the beginning of May and the Orientals the beginning of June. I must make note here that very few of the Oriental hybrids emerged the second year. The LA Hybrids had the greatest number of plants flowering, at almost 100% followed by Asiatic and Longiflorum at 80%, OT at approximately 60% and Oriental at only about 20%. The plant heights at flowering of the Asiatics were 28” tall and 35” tall for the LA hybrids. This may seem a bit tall but all the stems were strong and stood upright with little or no lodging. There were approximately 10 flowers per stem for Asiatics and up



LA Hybrid type lilies. Photo by Phil Orgeron.

## Digging in the Dirt

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to 20 flowers per stem for the LA hybrids. Now that is flower power! Flower longevity or number of days that stems produced quality flowers was best overall for the Asiatic and LA hybrids for an average of greater than 3 weeks or up to 4 weeks, respectively. The number of flowering stems also increased each year as lilies naturally produce offsets or bulblets.

The best lilies for landscape plantings from research at Burden are the LA hybrids followed by the Asiatic hybrids. At this time it is not recommended to plant the Oriental types. The inflorescence of lilies should be cut just under the last flower when flowering has finished. The entire stem of the plant can be cut when the leaves of the plants begin to turn brown or about 1.5 months after flowering. Leaving the stems for this period will provide the necessary energy for bulb growth and flowering for the next year. It is also recommended that lilies be planted in full sun and toward the back of the landscape due to plant height. The stems can also provide a nice texture to the landscape once flowering has finished. We have found no significant disease or insect problems with these lilies during the three year study.

I encourage you to add some sustainable diversity to your landscapes, plant some Asiatic or

LA hybrid lilies. You won't be disappointed! If you are interested in planting lilies in your landscape you should order your bulbs now! A few sources are: Brent and Becky's Bulbs, McClure & Zimmerman, B & D Lilies, Gilbert H. Wild and Sons, and the list goes on.

Come on out this summer to Burden Center to the Ornamental and Turf Research area (through the interstate tunnel on a dry day due to the I-10 renovations) and see this banquet of flowers yourself. A last little note...Marion Drummond and I are working on a Deep South Bulb Symposium for 2012 (dates to be forthcoming).

### Bulb Types, Cultivars, and Flower Colors

| Type        | Cultivar       | Color                               |
|-------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Asiatic     |                |                                     |
|             | Brunello*      | Orange                              |
|             | Gironde*       | Golden yellow                       |
|             | Navona*        | White                               |
| Oriental    |                |                                     |
|             | Casa Blanca    | White (fragrant)                    |
|             | Cobra          | Mengta red with white edge          |
|             | Conca d'Or     | Yellow lemon center with white edge |
|             | Sorbonne       | Pink with white edge                |
|             | Star Gazer     | Pink                                |
|             | Helvetia       | White, cream                        |
| LA Hybrid   |                |                                     |
|             | Ceb Dazzle*    | Yellow, bright                      |
|             | Ercolano*      | White, bright                       |
|             | Menorca*       | Orange with bright edge             |
|             | Red Alert*     | Red, bright                         |
|             | Royal Trinity* | Orange, dim                         |
|             | Samur*         | Pink, light                         |
| Longiflorum |                |                                     |
|             | White Heaven*  | White, Easter                       |
| OT          |                |                                     |
|             | Yelloween*     | Yellow, bright                      |

\*These cultivars performed best at Burden Center.



Top: LA Hybrid type lilies, from left to right, 'Ceb Dazzel', 'Ercolano', 'Royal Trinity'. Bottom: LA Hybrid, 'Ceb Dazzel'. Photos by Phil Orgeron.



## The Donation of Windrush

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his help at the Louisiana National Bank. Later, he served as a director on the Burden Foundation board and continued to be a trusted friend and advisor until his death in 2002.

Norman Efferson was then the dean of the LSU College of Agriculture. He later became the first Chancellor of the LSU AgCenter but at the time of the Burden donation all of the agriculture extension activities fell under the direction of the College of Agriculture. Johnny Cox (Peggy Cox, Windrush Gardens Curator, is his daughter-in-law) was head of the extension service. Both of these men, but especially Dean Efferson, were extremely interested in having LSU accept this donation and were strong advocates for the project among the LSU hierarchy, especially with the LSU Board of Supervisors. Although the university had been renting the property for more than twenty years for agricultural research and instruction, there was little interest, initially, on the part of the Board of Supervisors to accept the property. It was Norman Efferson who made the case that sold the board on the merits of

the acquisition of Windrush.

Shortly after the donation was finalized, Steele Burden and Alvin Rubin approached Dean Efferson to ask if a small tract, about one acre, of the property could be dedicated as a little museum to house artifacts that Steele had been collecting over the years. In 1970, the first outdoor vernacular architecture structures were moved in. This was the beginning of the LSU Rural Life Museum. Look at what has happened since then!

The Burden Foundation Board of Directors continues today to insure that Windrush is used for the purposes intended by the Burden Family. Two operative documents are used to clarify and enforce the donation covenants. They are the Master List of Conditions and Memorandum of Understanding. These documents are occasionally revised through negotiations between the Burden board and LSU. They are important documents to guide all of us who are involved with Windrush and are dedicated to the Burden family legacy.



### “Reflection in the Garden” Lunch Series

Noon to 1:00 PM in the  
Ione Burden Conference Center  
the first Monday of each month

Special guest speakers!  
Bring a brown bag lunch  
Drinks will be provided!

|         |   |                                   |
|---------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Apr 5   | Sustainable Home Gardening                                | Carl Motsenbocker                 |
| May 3   | Weed Out Those Weeds                                      | Ron Strahan                       |
| June 7  | Design, Build, and Maintenance of Ornamental Ponds        | Greg Lutz                         |
| July 5  | Dispel the Heat: Easy Landscape Irrigation                | Bob Souvestre                     |
| Aug 2   | More Than Ginger Ale                                      | Jeff Kuehny                       |
| Sept 13 | Fall/Winter Landscape Planning                            | Dan Gill                          |
| Oct 4   | Sweet Potatoes: They're Not Just for Thanksgiving Anymore | Don Labonte                       |
| Nov 1   | Strawberries: Planting, Caring and Eating                 | Charlie Johnson                   |
| Dec 6   | Design on a Dime Holiday Decorating                       | Barbara Laudun and Jeanie LeBlanc |

## Windrush Gardens: An Historic Treasure

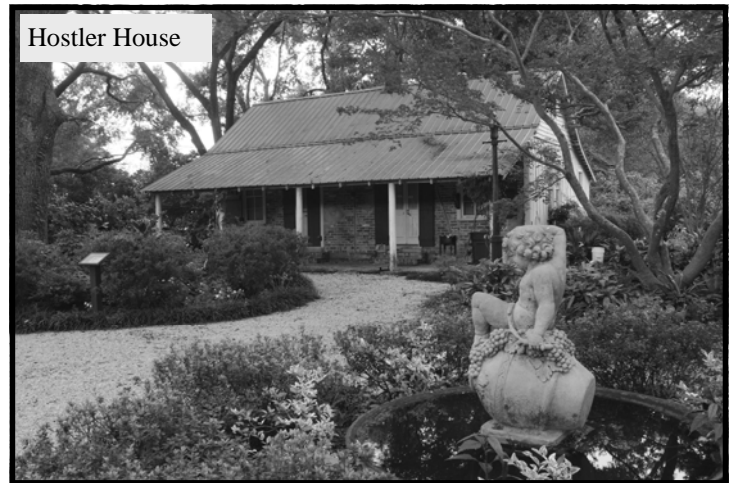
By Maia Butler

I lucked out on the sunny day in February when I met Peggy Cox at Burden Center to be escorted around the historic garden site of the Burden family home known as Windrush Gardens. Peggy has been for many years the curator of this restful, beautiful and somewhat hidden idle wild that is found in the middle of Baton Rouge. Her pride in its beauty and her faithful efforts to preserve its historical perspective are a reflection of her dedication to her craft and her love of gardens and gardening.

Peggy joined me in my car at the Burden Conference Center and directed me to drive through the Burden farmland to enter the Windrush Gardens by the back way through the Piney Woods. The Piney Woods were developed late in the life of Steele Burden, the original gardener for Windrush, and are relatively young compared to other garden areas. They create an open woodscape full of dappled sunlight with mounds of azaleas, camellias and small trees as under story plants giving it an expansive feel that belies its relative youth as a wooded area. It was developed to and serves the purpose of a transitional space between the semi-formal gardens and the surrounding farmland.

On our right Peggy pointed out the large pond that in summer is dotted with Louisiana Irises and is frequented year round by water fowl of all kinds. There is a gazebo with access through the garden and another that stands on the edge of the lake. At one time in the recent past a beaver had tried to make a home in the pond. It did considerable damage to some of the cypress trees that mark the edge of the pond, and had to be trapped and relocated. The decision to leave the damaged trees in place provided the opportunity to demonstrate the remarkable ability of cypress trees to re-grow the cambium layer and continue to thrive on the edge of the pond.

Peggy scooped some weed material out of the water and explained that invasive water weeds such as salvinias have moved into our waterways. They damage our eco system by overfilling the waterway with weeds, crowding out our native species and preventing light and air from getting into the water which helps maintain a healthy environment for fish and other aquatic creatures. This process of weed



proliferation breaks the natural life cycle of native plants and animals killing off the food source of native species and allowing non-natives to proliferate unchecked and continuing the cycle of damage. Peggy said the staff at Windrush hopes the freezing weather we experienced this winter killed off most of the salvinia weed.

It had been rainy a few days before so we bucked up our courage and drove my all wheel drive vehicle slowly and steadily through a damp low spot without getting stuck to reveal a new type of garden vista, the front yard of the historic Burden home.

To me the most remarkable thing about this area is the old towering magnolias and spreading live oaks that envelope the spacious central clearing which is open to sunlight. It gives a feeling of expansive enclosure that is relaxing and comforting. It is easy to imagine a family gathered for a picnic, playing games, and sipping iced tea from tinkling glasses on a lazy afternoon in this space.

Peggy has filled one side of the lawn with a demonstration garden of narcissi or daffodils to the less garden savvy. They are blooming abundantly and look like a long yellow and white carpet. Each cultivar is labeled so a gardener can study the flowers and select a favorite or two for the home garden. In another place beneath the oaks Peggy has created a fragrant bed of lavender and purple pansies that wave their happy pansy faces up at those who are lucky enough to pass by.

The under story plants are some of the



## Windrush Gardens: An Historic Treasure

*...continued*

favorites in the garden selected by the original gardener, Steele Burden. They include azalea, nandina, ardisia, and several varieties of ferns. Peggy explained Mr. Burden choose plants for color, texture, and fragrance not necessarily for blooming. He must have been an intelligent and practical man to have figured out how to enjoy a garden full of color without the heartache of trying to get sun loving plants to bloom in the heavy shade of the southern garden, especially if we note Windrush was developed in a time before air conditioning so shade was a valuable, even life giving commodity.

Peggy and I mounted the steps to the porch of the former Burden residence that is now a part of the museum. It is in a style called Creole Vernacular Architecture. It is a simple structure with a quiet elegance. She points out the symmetrical selection of plants in the landscape always chosen for texture and color. We peer through the floor length windows. The house is filled with interesting artifacts of a life gone by, visible through the windows that I call French doors. I am sure that during the summer months they were left open to gather the breezes. They were probably screened to prevent mosquito infestation,



but would have afforded a delightful view of the garden surrounding the home in every direction. There are shutters for closing out the winter winds to make a cozy space with large and beckoning fireplaces and chairs for gathering about the fire and tables for

meals.

Peggy and I walked around the house to the other side which would have been the back of the original house. This according to the tour information I read before coming is the first of the garden rooms developed by Steele Burden. If we think back to the time the home was part of a working farm, this area behind the house was reported to have been a fenced area for pigs. It was near enough to keep an eye on and far enough away to avoid some of the inevitable animal odors that would have been ever present, especially in the summer!

Peggy and the staff at Windrush have worked hard to restore these gardens following the recent hurricanes, especially Gustav that hit the Baton Rouge area particularly hard. The garden lost several trees and specimen plants that were focal features of the garden spaces; some others were damaged so much that their survival is in question to this day. The loss of trees has changed the nature of this garden as these shade loving plants struggle to adapt to their new sunny environment. It is in this area that the true sense of Peggy's love of the garden and respect for the work of preserving the concept and feel of Windrush became most evident to me.

I saw Peggy first study the garden as a whole for its overall appearance and note the color was off on some gardenias and a few other plants. She noted the preparation of some beds was coming along, then she lamented the loss of the planned plantings due to the unusual freeze that caused a power outage in the green house. I could tell she had switched into horticulturalist mode. She regretted the hours of work of her valuable group of volunteers that was lost. She was acutely aware of the well being of her plant charges and thinking in terms of how the loss of one set of carefully cultivated cuttings was going to affect the outcome of her budget for the next year. It was easy to see the balance of the business woman, horticulturalist, and artist that make up Peggy's personality and makes her so well suited for her job! Peggy seems to love every aspect of the job as curator of Windrush Gardens: the plants, the gardens, the volunteers, the planning and the problem solving.

## Windrush Gardens: An Historic Treasure

...continued

Peggy then switched back to tour guide and showed me the garden studio where Steele Burden worked as an artist and where he gave garden parties. It is outfitted like a camp with a cot and some other furniture, a fire place, and again, wide doors that can be opened in the summer to catch the breezes and to afford wide vistas of the surrounding garden.

From the garden studio it is a short walk to the pigeonier which was modeled after the pigeonier at Parlange in New Roads. It is a small elegant structure with brick walls that have niches so the birds can enter and exit but too small for most of their predators; the lower portion is used to store garden tools so it is practical as well.

Next, we went to the hostler house where Peggy's office is located. It is filled with seed samples and plant cuttings and various flotsam and jetsam of a person of a horticultural persuasion. Peggy explained a hostler is a person who manages the horses on the farm of the early twentieth and



nineteenth century and before. Indeed, it must have been a very important job on a farm as all of the heavy work, clearing, plowing, hauling, and preparing the fields was done by horse or mule instead of modern machines. Of course, there were no cars either so transportation to and from town was also carried out by horse and carriage, wagon, or horseback. I remembered the large collection of wagons, carriages, and horse paraphernalia located in the adjacent Rural Life Museum. All of these things are a reflection of another time and some say a simpler life.

Peggy and I rounded out the rest of our time together viewing new

plants in the less formal part of the gardens,

lamenting the loss of some plants to our winter freeze, and enjoying the blooms of the camellias that were recently added to the collection.

Peggy's broad knowledge of plant materials and plant care are evident in all that she does as curator of Windrush. It is truly a treat for the eyes, a joy to the soul and a privilege to spend time in this beautiful, restful, living memorial to the Burden siblings.

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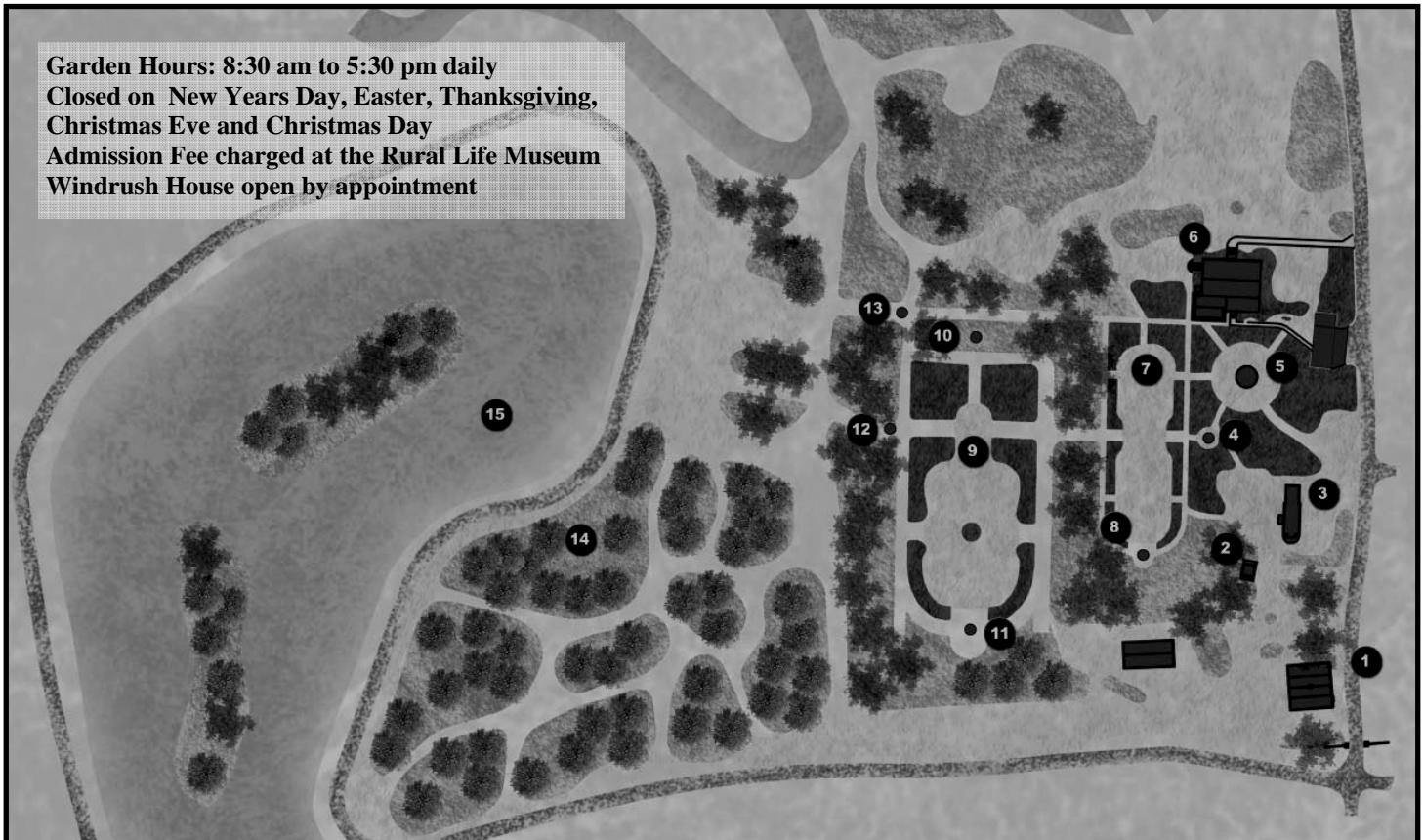
Maia Butler

Aline Creed

Ginger Ku



## Map of Windrush Gardens



### KEY

- (1) **Hostler's House:** Entrance to the gardens and one of the two 19th century structures original to Windrush. The hostler was a hired hand employed to tend the horses.
- (2) **Pigeonnier:** Wealthy plantation owners often had pigeonniers to provide squab for fine dining. This one was constructed as an ornamental garden shed.
- (3) **Garden I & Garden House:** Steele Burden spent many of his early days here painting, reading and entertaining guests. He developed this area during the 1920s.
- (4) **Young Hermes:** A bronze sculpture of young Hermes in repose on an old well.
- (5) **Water Lily Pond:** The fountain in the pond was acquired in 1925. This zinc statue is thought to be one of the first pieces of sculpture in downtown Baton Rouge and later moved to Windrush.
- (6) **Windrush House and Porch:** The Burden home is an example of Creole Vernacular Architecture, with an expansive front lawn bordered by Wards Creek.
- (7) **Garden II:** Developed in the 1930s, these flowerbeds exhibit seasonal color.
- (8) **Hermes & Zeus:** Hermes whispering to Zeus. Acquired in 1935, bronze.
- (9) **Garden III:** These shrub borders, developed in the 1940s, surround a large expanse of lawn.
- (10) **Atalanta:** This mythological female athlete agreed to marry any man who could beat her in a foot race.
- (11) **Hippomenes:** In the race, he threw golden apples in front of Atalanta, she stopped to pick them up and he won.
- (12) **A Wounded Amazon:** Marble sculpture circa 1850.
- (13) **Bacchus:** This carved stone statue is the god of wine, the inspirer of ritual madness and ecstasy.
- (14) **Piney Woods:** This was one of the last areas developed by Steele, and it was his experiment in a more naturalistic picturesque landscape, serving as a transitional piece leading to the lakes. Azaleas and camellias fill this large informal area under the pines.
- (15) **The Lakes:** By creating these lakes, Steele added larger water features, utilizing the soil to create changes in topography and providing a sense of enclosure from the outlying agronomic landscape. He enhanced the edges of the lake with a gazebo and planted native Louisiana irises and cypress trees.

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**www. BurdenHorticultureSociety.com**  
**Please check our website for new activities, updates and changes as so much depends on the weather.**

This issue dedicated  
in memory of  
**Jesse Coates,**  
beloved husband of  
Burden Horticulture  
Society  
board member,  
Ferrill Ann Coates

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Burden Horticulture Society

BHS is a 501 (c) 5 non-profit organization recently formed to promote, support, and expand the use of the LSU AgCenter's Burden Center. It operates under the auspices of the LSU Foundation solely for educational and fundraising purposes. Partnering with other gardening and outdoor organizations, plus the Rural Life Museum, we strive to offer informative opportunities for the public and to increase awareness of this local resource.

Your gift will allow us to develop a Master Plan for Burden Center and will help sponsor special educational events.






Please mail to: Burden Horticulture Society
4560 Essen Lane
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

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**BHS Special Events 2010**

|                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| April 18, 2010        | Afternoon of Roses      |
| August 14, 2010       | Gingers and Sale        |
| October 16 & 17, 2010 | Corn Maze Pumpkin Patch |
| October 27, 2010      | Wine and Roses          |