**AROUND THE GARDENS:**

**Summer Favorites**

Be sure to watch for these seasonal standouts on your next visit.

1. **What it is:** Plumleaf Azalea
   **(Rhododendron prunifolium)**

   **What we love about it:** This is one of the rarest of all our native azaleas, found only in the wild in a narrow region of Georgia and Alabama. Its deep orange-red blooms are a final crescendo into fall.

   **Where to find it:** Kaul Wildflower Garden

2. **What it is:** Endless Summer Hydrangea
   **(Hydrangea macrophylla ‘Endless Summer’)**

   **What we love about it:** This shrub brightens shady corners and is true to its name, blooming into fall.

   **Where to find it:** new planting at the southern end of the Formal Garden

3. **What it is:** Ostrich Fern
   **(Matteuccia struthiopteris)**

   **What we love about it:** Large, dark brown, fertile fronds emerge from the crown of the foliage in midsummer and persist through winter.

   **Where to find it:** bog area near entrance to Kaul Wildflower Garden

4. **What it is:** Daylily
   **(Hemerocallis)**

   **What we love about it:** This is a staple in Southern gardens, with thousands of varieties available.

   **Where to find it:** Jemison Lily Garden

5. **What it is:** Coneflower
   **(Echinacea)**

   **What we love about it:** Coneflower features a wonderfully long bloom time, which extends through warm summer months.

   **Where to find it:** Forman Garden

6. **What it is:** Lavender
   **(Lavandula)**

   **What we love about it:** Lavender’s fragrant, deep purple bloom spikes appear at the beginning of summer and can be dried and enjoyed long past their bloom cycle.

   **Where to find it:** raised beds in the Enabling Garden

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A facility of the Birmingham Park and Recreation Board, the Birmingham Botanical Gardens is the result of a successful public/private partnership between the City of Birmingham and the nonprofit Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, a mission-driven membership organization that seeks to protect, nurture, and share the wonders of the Gardens. We hope you enjoy this issue of the Friends’ quarterly newsletter. Thank you for visiting and supporting the Gardens!

Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens practices a policy of equal opportunity and equal access to services for all persons regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, orientation or sex identity.
Dear Friends:

Warm days signal beautiful blooms, hearty vegetables, relaxed visitors, and loads of summertime botanical inspiration here at the Gardens. In this issue, we are excited to showcase some of the many happy campers who are discovering the wonders of nature over their summer breaks, as well as passionate volunteers and donors who share their time and resources to enhance this special place and tell its powerful story.

Our feature article about the Bruno Vegetable Garden highlights a theme that is much on our minds as we plan for the future of the Gardens: that of sustainable gardening. City of Birmingham Gardener Steven Knop took a six-month leave of absence in 2018 to apprentice at UC Santa Cruz’s Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems; he returned to Birmingham with new ideas for sustainable gardening techniques. As you’ll see in this fun and thought-provoking interview, a commitment to sustainability takes time and careful planning but in the end makes for a healthier earth for current and future generations.

A generous memorial gift from the Buce family will allow us to expand the ways that we’re sharing lessons of sustainability with visitors of all ages. The Annie Lee Buce Matthews Fund for Sustainable Gardening is serving as a catalyst for strengthening our emphasis on earth-friendly practices and the benefits of fresh vegetables. Planned enhancements include new educational materials and signage in the Bruno Vegetable Garden. This endowed gift will make an incredibly meaningful impact on our visitors’ experience.

We hope that you’ll visit soon to experience for yourself what’s in bloom or to enjoy a gardening or fitness class in this inspiring setting. Let friends and family know that we still have openings in several of our great summer camp offerings. (Visit bbgardens.org/summercamps to learn more.) Be sure to join us as well on July 17 for our popular Flicks Among the Flowers featuring a 30th-anniversary showing of Field of Dreams!

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Savor the fruits of your home garden by trying your hand at two recipes in the issue! Shrimp Gazpacho (at right) comes courtesy of James Beard Award-winning chef Chris Hastings, who is co-owner of Hot & Hot Fish Club and a valued member of our Board of Directors. Enjoy as well “The Bruno” (see page 9), a cocktail created by Feizal Valli and Rachael Roberts of The Atomic Bar & Lounge, a James Beard semifinalist, after a recent visit to the Gardens.

Fall is around the corner, so mark your calendar now for our Fall Plant Sale (September 14–15) featuring our member-plant giveaway, and the 2019 Antiques at the Gardens (October 3–6), which has benefited the Gardens since 2006. Thank you for your support throughout the year, and for your commitment to protecting, nurturing, and sharing these extraordinary Gardens!

Tom Underwood
Executive Director
Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens

CHEF CHRIS HASTINGS’ SHRIMP GAZPACHO

YIELD: ABOUT 6 CUPS/SERVINGS

Chris Hastings, chef and co-owner of Birmingham’s Hot & Hot Fish Club and Board member of the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, offers up this delicious Southern take on a classic Spanish soup.

1½ pounds ripe tomatoes, cored
(3 to 4 medium tomatoes)
½ cup peeled, seeded, and finely diced cucumber
½ cup finely diced zucchini
½ cup finely diced yellow squash
½ cup peeled, seeded, and finely diced tomato
½ cup seeded and finely diced red bell pepper
½ cup seeded and finely diced yellow bell pepper
½ cup finely diced poblano pepper
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¾ cup balsamic vinegar
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 pound cooked, peeled, and diced fresh shrimp (about 26 large)
12 fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons lemon oil*

Slice tomatoes into quarters. Place tomatoes in a food mill set over a bowl, and turn to extract about 2 cups of fresh tomato juice. Discard seeds and peel. (Or seed and puree in a food processor or blender.) Strain through a fine-meshed sieve, and discard any solids.

Combine tomato juice and next 9 ingredients in a large bowl, stirring well to combine. Season with salt and pepper, and stir in the diced shrimp. Chill at least 2 hours. Ladle into six serving bowls, and garnish with chopped basil and lemon oil. Serve chilled.

*Chris uses Agrumato Lemon Olive Oil.
Exploring the Gardens

From what happens to rocks over time and how to plant seeds and make cuttings to the meaning of propagation, the Friends’ Garden Explorations program encourages young people to dig into environmental science.

By BROOKE MCMINN Photography by GRAHAM YELTON

Each summer, Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens staff and volunteers work with 300-400 children from across the Magic City through Garden Explorations. Gardens Explorations is a free program developed by the Friends for elementary children ages 6-12 enrolled in the City of Birmingham’s Park and Recreation Centers’ summer camps. Campers visit the Gardens for a full day of science, learning, and fun in one of Birmingham’s most beautiful settings.

The Garden Explorations program began in 1997 under the name of Zoo Gardens, which brought students to both the Birmingham Zoo and the Birmingham Botanical Gardens for lessons in environmental science. More than 7,500 children have visited the Gardens to learn about plant-related sciences through immersion in nature since the program’s inception. Garden Explorations introduces campers to the basics of horticulture, incorporates components of environmental education, and emphasizes the Gardens as a resource and respite for them. The program implements a distinct curriculum with fun and educational games, activities, and tours of the Gardens’ collections such as the Barber Alabama Woodlands, the Crape Myrtle Garden, and the Bruno Vegetable Garden.

The Garden Explorations curriculum includes hands-on activities related to soil formation and composition, plant propagation methods, and even container gardening. Campers get their hands dirty and play fun games as soil scientists as they learn about soil formation and composition. They become horticulturists creating their own herb containers. They are plant scientists propagating new plants by seeds, cuttings, and divisions. Through these interactive lessons, the Friends hopes to instill a lasting appreciation for the Gardens, for plants, and for the crucial role they play in our environment.
Warm Welcome to our Summer Interns

The Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens is excited to welcome these three talented students this summer. Be sure to say hello when you see them out and about in the Gardens!

JEFF MARGREITER
Rising Senior, Horticulture (Greenhouse/Nursery Management), Auburn University
2019 Kaul Wildflower Garden Summer Intern
Passionate about ecology and native species conservation, Jeff is studying greenhouse and nursery management at Auburn University, where he plans to pursue a Graduate Certificate in Public Horticulture after earning his bachelor's degree. He believes that public gardens have the power to impact how we interact with our environment. This summer, he is helping with the propagation of native plants—many of which are rare and endangered—and organizing and cataloging plants in the Gardens' shadehouse. Working alongside Kaul Wildflower Garden Curator John Manion, he also played an integral role in the 2019 Native Plant Conference and is engaged in the design and planting of an area in the Kaul Wildflower Garden.

ABBY MCLEOD LOGUE
Rising Senior, English, Wofford College
2019 Communications and Marketing Intern
With a deep-rooted interest in storytelling and communications, Abby is studying English, creative writing, and studio art at Wofford College in South Carolina. She has written blog posts and overseen social media for South Carolina-based artist Dorothy Shain and has coordinated social media for Wofford College's Office of the Chaplain. She traveled to New Zealand in January 2018 to study geography, wildlife, and culture, and to Paris in spring 2019 to study art history and communications, and plans to return abroad in January 2020 to explore cultural history and the modern world in Vietnam. As our 2019 Communications and Marketing Intern, she is helping share the Gardens' story through social media and digital promotions.

JESSICA WILLIAMS
Rising Senior, Environmental Science, Alabama A&M University
Recipient of the 2019 Rotary Club of Shades Valley Summer Internship
From working on hydrology and geographic information systems in Alabama A&M's Remote Sensing Lab, to developing a fish farm with a sustainable aquaponics system for the university's Wildlife Lab, to conducting research on the effects of biochar on greenhouse soil at Nanjing Forestry University in China, Jessica is well on her way to becoming a plant and environmental scientist. As our 2019 Rotary Club of Shades Valley Summer Intern, she is working on signage for 45 varieties of flowers growing in the Dunn Formal and Ireland Old-Fashioned Rose Gardens and the Japanese Garden, studying storm water management, and assisting with Education and Outreach programs.

The Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens is grateful to the Rotary Club of Shades Valley, which has sponsored a summer internship at the Gardens for more than a decade. Internships are excellent opportunities for full-time college students and recent graduates to learn skills in applied horticulture and visitor services. Interested in sponsoring a named internship at the Gardens? Please contact Penney Hartline at phartline@bbgardens.org or 205.474.3961.
SUSTAINABLE GARDENING:

Planting the Seeds for a Greener Future

For three decades, the Bruno Vegetable Garden has inspired visitors of all ages to choose, cook, and grow fresh produce. As it continues to fuel young minds and provide food for people in need, the garden is also cultivating an appreciation for the power of eco-friendly growing practices.

By MINDY KEYES BLACK  Photography by GRAHAM YELTON

“WHO KNOWS WHAT THIS IS?” CITY of Birmingham Gardener Steven Knop asks his latest visitors, two dozen bubbly 4- to 7-year-olds touring the Bruno Vegetable Garden on day three of their weeklong Summer Garden Chefs camp.

“Eggplant!” the cheerful chorus sings out. “A giant eggplant!” one enthusiast adds.

“Eggplant is right—you are so smart!” Steven congratulates them. “Now this next one might be a little tricky: What is this?”

The kids pause, and a quiet voice asks, “Parsley?”

“I heard it—that’s it—it’s parsley! You can pass it around, touch it, and smell it if you like,” Steven says.

“We actually take all this food that we grow and donate it to homeless shelters around the city for people who don’t have enough food,” he continues. “So I come out here to work, and all these volunteers—do you see the people working in the garden behind you?—they help us to grow and harvest this food and to weed the garden. We’re trying to turn this garden into an organic garden, which means we want to grow it without pesticides. That’s the stuff you spray on plants to keep the bugs away, but a lot of it is dangerous to bees. That’s not good because every single veggie you see is here because a bee came and pollinated it.”

Since its creation in the late 1980s, the Bruno Vegetable Garden has served as an inspiration for gardeners and garden chefs of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels. Designed by Mary Carolyn Cleveland, Jody H. Hamre, and Carolyn D. Tyne and funded by the Bruno family, which continues to provide support, the year-round garden showcases favorite seasonal crops from kale, cabbages, broccoli, and greens in winter; to sweet peas, lettuce, kohlrabi, and
City of Birmingham Gardener Steven Knop shows freshly picked produce to Summer Garden Chefs campers. Seven-year-old Miles Coleman-Sizemore proudly displays a pole bean. Students listen as Knop talks about eggplants. Campers explore the Herb Terrace adjacent to the Bruno Vegetable Garden. Students prepare to taste fresh green beans before continuing their tour of the garden (three bottom pictures). Instructor Tanya Allen shows a camper how to plant a lima bean. OPPOSITE: Students in the Friends’ Summer Garden Chefs camp enjoy a stroll through the bean arbor.
Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens member Blair Reynolds, who volunteers with the Vegetables growing group, harvests flat-leaf parsley. ‘Sun Gold’ cherry tomatoes and leaf lettuce are among the more than 3,000 pounds of fresh produce that the garden donates each year to Birmingham-area homeless shelters. Friends member and volunteer Janet Lauer shows off a basket of freshly picked eggplant. Member and volunteer Dan Jones welcomes a UAB student volunteer. City of Birmingham Gardener Steven Knop and volunteers start the morning with a group huddle. Steven holds onions on the first day of the summer harvest. The garden’s new fencing, donated by Brasfield & Gorrie and constructed in fall 2018 by Brasfield & Gorrie volunteers, keeps rabbits at bay.
Onions in spring; to tomatoes, peppers, squash, and eggplants in summer; to okra and pumpkins in fall. As a living classroom, the garden also has the potential to demonstrate the importance of sustainable farming to our collective future.

**Season’s Greetings**

It’s the first harvest day of the summer—several weeks before the Summer Garden Chefs tour—and Steven is getting out buckets for members of the Vegetable Garden’s planting plan that he and Horticulture District Supervisor Virgil Mathews update each year to make sure that the Gardens’ vegetables—from low-growing to roasers to climbers—have the space, time frame, and physical supports they need to thrive. To Steven, the vegetable garden is as much art as it is science.

“You’ll see we have cucumbers growing up along the trellis there with okra, which will grow as tall as me,” he says. “Then the beans will come cascading down. I’m trying to make it pretty and edible. The scarlet runner beans growing along the wall don’t taste that great, but they make really nice scarlet flowers.”

Steven stops at a partially empty bed where cowpeas are growing. “This bed used to have a problem with nematodes,” he says. “These are mini microscopic worms that can show up when a bed gets too much fertilizer or too much water. A lot of water can kill all the good things in the soil, so parasites come out. But the beans growing here now fix nitrogen in the soil, so this bed will be able to grow other vegetables after the soil nutrients are restored.”

Passionate about organic farming and sustainable gardening practices, Steven took a six-month leave of absence from the Gardens last year to accept an apprenticeship at UC Santa Cruz’s Center for Agriculture and Environmental Sustainability (CASFS). The program, now in its 52nd year, researches best practices in sustainable agriculture, organic food production, and resource-conserving farming techniques.

“Basically, they use a 3-acre garden and a 30-acre production farm to teach gardeners how to manage small organic gardens,” explains Steven. As one of 40 apprentices accepted to the 2018 program, he studied organic gardening and farming; ecological interactions among plants, soils, climate, insects, and pathogens; and political, economic, and cultural facets of the American—and global—food system.

**On Home Ground**

The Bruno Vegetable Garden’s planting plan already incorporated a number of longtime best practices including crop rotation to prevent disease and balance soil nutrients while also keeping vegetables on display for visitors to see and learn from through the seasons. Steven came back from his apprenticeship with new guidelines for other sustainable practices and will provide ongoing support for the demonstration of sustainable gardening techniques.

“This visionary gift will allow us to make a significant step forward in communicating the importance and relevance of sustainable gardening, both to those who visit the Gardens in person and those who visit virtually,” says Tom Underwood, Executive Director of the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens. “We are grateful to the Buce family as a tribute to the Lee Buce Matthews Fund for Sustainable Gardening will enable the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens to communicate the importance of fresh, locally grown food and earth-friendly gardening practices and will provide ongoing support for the demonstration of sustainable gardening techniques.

“Drip irrigation would prevent disease from spreading and would use a fraction of the water because it would go right where it’s needed instead of getting everything wet. And then hoops would be good because with a lot of insect pests, they could break the life cycle. They could also help shade plants that need to be shaded in the summer, and we could put frost cloth over the beds to extend the growing season. Those are next on my wish list.”

For longtime volunteer Hope Cooper, who leads the Friends’ Vegetable growing volunteer group, teaching earth-friendly gardening provides this and future generations with a powerful model that they can put into practice at home. “I think that sustainable gardening is important as a teaching tool and as an example,” she says. “Kids learn from it. Visitors come in and ask us questions while we’re out in the garden weeding and harvesting every Wednesday. It’s a great way to learn just by observing what’s going on.”

Central to the message of sustainability, Hope says, is the garden’s practice of delivering the harvest to community kitchens, which she volunteers to do regularly. “People need food to live, food can be expensive, and people sometimes get down on their luck,” she says. “You give a hand and maybe that hand gets given to somebody else in the future. In the same way, the young people who visit love learning about fresh vegetables, and hopefully they pass it on.”

“It’s wonderful to see the ways that this popular garden continues to plant the seeds not only for a love of gardening and fresh, locally sourced food but also for a deep respect for the earth,” says Tom Underwood, Executive Director of the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens. “Sustainability is a timeless lesson of taking care of what we have and then paying it forward for those who come after us.”

**Gift Paves Way For Sustainable Gardening Programming, Signage**

An endowed fund given in memory of Annie Lee Buce Matthews is providing the seed money to develop new educational programs and signs in the Bruno Vegetable Garden to teach the Gardens’ 350,000 annual visitors about sustainable gardening.

Created by the Buce family as a tribute to the longtime educator, the Annie Lee Buce Matthews Fund for Sustainable Gardening will enable the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens to communicate the importance of fresh, locally grown food and earth-friendly gardening practices and will provide ongoing support for the demonstration of sustainable gardening techniques.

“Now … who wants to try a green bean?”

“Me! I do! I want one!” sounds the reply.

“You’ve got it! We just picked these beans this morning—I’ll pass them around,” he says. “Break a piece off and give it to somebody else to try.”

“Look at what I’ve collected!” says one camper.

“He gave me a green bean!”

“I want to keep this for my family!” another announces.

“I got a seed out, and I’m not eating it,” says a third.

“I’m gonna plant it!”
**SUMMER CALENDAR**

**JULY**
1 ART AT THE GARDENS: Works by Kim Kreis (through August 31)
2 YOGA WITH LINDSEY
2 THYME TO READ BOOK CLUB: *The School of Essential Ingredients*
7 TANABATA FESTIVAL
8-12 LITTLE SEEDS: Growing Little Gardeners (5K–Grade 2)
8-12 SUMMER GARDEN EXPLORERS (Grades 3–6)
8-12 TROPICAL GARDEN CHEFS: A Conservatory Adventure (Grades 3–6)
9 YOGA WITH LINDSEY
10 BROWN BAG LUNCH & LEARN: Critters
10 APOLLO MOON TREES AND NASA MOON ROCKS PROGRAM
11 YOGA WITH LINDSEY
13 WHAT’S THAT PLANT? How To Identify Plants
15–19 SPA CAMP (5K–Grade 4)
15–19 JAPANESE GARDEN EXPLORATION (5K–Grade 2, Grades 3–6)
16 YOGA WITH LINDSEY
17 BIRMINGHAM FERN SOCIETY WELCOMES SHOPPE: Care and Mounting of Staghorn Ferns
17 FLICKS AMONG THE FLOWERS: *Field of Dreams*
18 YOGA WITH LINDSEY
20 IDENTIFICATION OF NATIVE WOODY PLANTS: Trees, Shrubs, Vines, and Ground Covers
20 FAMILY YOGA IN THE GARDENS
22–26 FAIRY TALES IN THE GARDENS (Age 4–Grade 2)
22–26 ADVENTURES IN THE GARDENS: A Family Camp Experience (Adult[s] + children age 4+)
22–26 THE SECRET GARDEN: A Summer Play in the Gardens (Grades 3–6)
23 YOGA WITH LINDSEY
27 SOUTHERN FOLK MEDICINE
29 SECOND NATURE: Adult Summer Camp (through August 2)
29 GARDEN HACKS: Technology in the Gardens (Grades 6–9, through August 2)

**AUGUST**
6 YOGA WITH LINDSEY
6 THYME TO READ BOOK CLUB: *The Food Explorer: The True Adventures of the Globe-trotting Botanist Who Transformed What America Eats*
7 BROWN BAG LUNCH & LEARN: Permaculture
17 FAMILY YOGA IN THE GARDENS
21 BROWN BAG LUNCH & LEARN: Alabama’s Top Outdoor Spots

**SEPTEMBER**
4 BROWN BAG LUNCH & LEARN: Propagation
6 OPENING RECEPTION—ART AT THE GARDENS: Art by Crest Glass Collective (through October 31)
7 FAMILY YOGA IN THE GARDENS
10 THYME TO READ BOOK CLUB: *Stir My Broken Brain and the Meals That Brought Me Home*
14–15 FALL PLANT SALE
18 BROWN BAG LUNCH & LEARN: Ask the Experts

For more information about these classes and events visit [bbgardens.org](http://bbgardens.org). We look forward to seeing you soon at the Gardens!
Members-Only Class: Botanical-Based Cocktails
Featuring Feizal Valli and Rachael Roberts of The Atomic Bar & Lounge
Try this recipe at home, then register to join us for this special class as Feizal and Rachael share ideas for other creative ways to use herbs in cocktails.
Monday, August 19 | 6-8 p.m.
For Members of the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens
Cost: $20
Register at bbgardens.org/classes

THE BRUNO
Courtesy of The Atomic Bar & Lounge
Inspired by a recent visit to the Bruno Vegetable Garden and Herb Terrace, Feizal Valli and Rachael Roberts of The Atomic Bar & Lounge in Birmingham created this refreshing cocktail. Enjoy, then join us in August for a fun Members-only class led by Feizal and Rachael!

INGREDIENTS
1 ½ ounces Cathead Honeysuckle Vodka
½ ounces St-Germain Elderflower Liqueur
½ ounces fresh, pulp-free lemon juice
½ ounces lemon verbena/cucumber syrup*
2 dashes Creole Bitters
1 egg white

* FOR THE SYRUP
Juice three large cucumbers, and strain through a fine strainer. Add white sugar in equal parts to the amount of cucumber juice yielded. Stir until sugar is totally dissolved. Add 6-8 large leaves of lemon verbena, and blend in a blender for 30 seconds. Strain again.

FOR THE COCKTAIL
Add all ingredients into a shaker without ice. Shake for 30 seconds. Add ice. Shake for 30 seconds. Double-strain into a cocktail glass or martini glass. Garnish with bloomed flower or fresh lavender.

FALL PLANT SALE
Mark your calendar to join us for our annual Fall Plant Sale at the Gardens! Choose from a large selection of herbs, trees, fall annuals, shrubs, natives, perennials, and more. (Autumn is the best time to plant trees and shrubs.) The fall sale will also feature our Member plant giveaway. Get ready to get planting: Proceeds benefit the stewardship and enhancement of the Gardens, educational programs, and outreach activities.
Saturday, September 14 | 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Sunday, September 15 | Noon – 4 p.m.
Birmingham Botanical Gardens
bbgardens.org/fallplantsale

FLICKS AMONG THE FLOWERS
Enjoy a modern classic on the big screen in the beautiful setting of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens by joining us for our summer Flicks Among the Flowers presented by Publix Super Markets Charities. Our July flick is Field of Dreams, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this summer! Food by the Gardens Café by Kathy G will be available for purchase. (Don’t miss the café’s featured adult specialty drink, Strawberry “Fields” Lemonade.) Gates open at 6 p.m., and the film will begin at sunset!
Wednesday, July 17 | Sunset (around 8 p.m.)
Formal Garden in front of the Conservatory
Free and open to the public ($5 suggested donation)
Make it a date night or bring friends and family, and don’t forget your blanket.
bbgardens.org/flicks
MEET OUR 2019
ANTIQUES AT THE GARDENS HONOREES:
Emily and Bill Bowron
By WENDY WALLACE JOHNSON

FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS
is pleased to announce the 2019 Antiques at the Gardens honorees: Emily and Bill Bowron. Emily, a Savannah native, is a past co-chair of AATG, an avid gardener, and a former competitive equestrian. Bill, a native of Birmingham, is Chairman, President, and CEO of Red Diamond Inc., which has sponsored the headline lectures at Antiques at the Gardens since 2009. Bill is also Vice Chair of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and President of the Mountain Brook Sports Foundation.

The Bowrons’ involvement in the Gardens stretches back decades. “I remember visiting the Gardens as a child with my mother, and I recall how excited she was when the Conservatory opened,” says Bill. “We donated coffee trees to the Gardens shortly thereafter.”

“I did a little bit of volunteer work in the greenhouses many years ago, but then life got in the way,” says Emily. “My horse and I retired from riding competitively in 2011. I turned to volunteerism to fill the void, so when I was asked to co-chair Antiques at the Gardens with Leah Taylor in 2015, I considered it a wonderful opportunity.”

Emily serves on the Antiques Advisory Board, having chaired it for two years. Shortly after Antiques at the Gardens, she became a member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens and continues to serve on the Board today as Secretary.

Antiques at the Gardens and the Birmingham Botanical Gardens have long been a family affair for the Bowrons and their two children. “My mother would come over from Savannah to attend and to support the dealers at Antiques at the Gardens,” Emily says. “And Bill and I always enjoyed attending Antiques at the Gardens, especially the Gala. Our house is a testament to the fact that we have supported the show over the years, so we have come to know several of the dealers pretty well,” says Emily.

Over the years the Bowrons have taken advantage of other aspects of the Gardens and its many program offerings. “I try to fill my garden with plants from the Spring Plant Sale. As a family, we love to visit the Dunn Formal Rose Garden on Mother’s Day; we have hiked the Kaul Wildflower Garden, and I have taken a class on native plants with John Manion; we have attended Bonsai Society and Orchid Society shows, to name just a few things,” Emily says. “Flicks Among the Flowers has become a favorite event for our family also, as we enjoy setting up a delicious picnic and watching a good movie under the stars.”

During their tenure as AATG co-chairs, Emily and Leah impacted programming by reintroducing Saturday programs and offering the lectures at no charge to see how they would go over. Taste In Spades was a huge success, and the lectures were filled to capacity. A takeaway from that year was to expect the unexpected: A fully set table that was the subject of one presentation collapsed just prior to the session, breaking every glass and plate. “Everyone, including the presenter, handled the mishap with a sense of humor,” says Emily. “You have to roll with the punches sometimes!”

Emily says subsequent chairs have done much to advance the event. “With the inclusion of Martha Stewart last year, they have taken our special weekend to a whole new level, and it will simply keep getting better and better,” she says. “The volunteer committees are always looking for ways to change Saturday programs and offering the lectures at no charge to see how they would go over. Taste In Spades was a huge success, and the lectures were filled to capacity. A takeaway from that year was to expect the unexpected: A fully set table that was the subject of one presentation collapsed just prior to the session, breaking every glass and plate. “Everyone, including the presenter, handled the mishap with a sense of humor,” says Emily. “You have to roll with the punches sometimes!”

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things and make improvements ... exceptional speakers, different vendors, new programs ... I love that we are keeping Antiques exciting! It is very special that Antiques at the Gardens is able to bring in nationally acclaimed speakers to share with the Birmingham community. And even more special that the funds from this event make the Gardens more accessible to all."

Reflecting on her year as co-chair of AATG, Emily says, "I loved every second of working with an amazing team of volunteers and the Friends and Gardens staff. But, needless to say, serving as a co-chair can be exhausting and stressful. As I was leaving on one particularly trying day, perhaps questioning why I had volunteered in the first place, I stepped outside and saw a bus of schoolchildren getting ready for their field trip, and I could tell that they were so excited!" she says. "That's why I'm here, and that's why I'm doing this: to share my love of the Gardens and the outdoors with these kids that might not otherwise have an opportunity to experience this wonderful place."

With the leadership and generosity of supporters such as the Bowrons, the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens is able to develop educational programs and outreach activities that impact thousands of children and adults each year and to provide important support for the ongoing stewardship and enhancement of the Gardens.

"I believe that the Birmingham Botanical Gardens is one of the true gems of Birmingham," says Emily. "There is truly something for everyone: education, recreation, exercise, and just plain fun. One only has to visit to see the diversity of people enjoying the Gardens."

Bill says there are many reasons that Red Diamond continues its support of the Gardens. "It is part of our community outreach and is in recognition of the stature of the Gardens nationally, which further benefits our city," he says.

"The Gardens creates the opportunity for people to enjoy a culturally rich environment, free of charge, year-round, and as such this is a wonderful asset."

Please join us as we celebrate Emily and Bill at the 2019 Antiques at the Gardens October 3–6!
THE STORY OF BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS and its successes is not told in its numbers—it is told in each person who plants a seed. The Gardens has 67.5 acres filled with 30 lush thematic gardens composed of over 3,000 taxa of plants. Our library, the only public horticultural library in the U.S., shelves over 9,000 items and loans over 10,000 items annually. Our education programs host more than 10,000 schoolchildren for free each year.

While we could continue to share more staggering numbers of the things we do for our community and people we serve, like our more than 350,000 annual visitors and 30,000 volunteer hours logged, the real story of Birmingham Botanical Gardens is you.

The people listed here, those who each give their time, their donations, and their social media space to the Gardens, are the real mosaic of what keeps this place special, fruitful, and growing.

Each individual’s contribution is vital to ensuring that this amazing green space continues to serve as a respite for people of all abilities and backgrounds, and that impactful education programs, revitalization projects, community outreach, tree plantings, endemic plant preservation, food donations, conferences, archival history, and internships enrich our community daily.

We thank those below who are making the difference, and you, for taking that next step to enrich the Gardens by making a donation by visiting bbgardens.org/support, by calling 205.444.3950, or by making a check out to “Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens.”

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Penney & Roger Hartline  
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January 1 - March 31, 2019

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From left: Louise Wrinkle with Norman Kent Johnson, Barbara Paul Robinson, and Tom Underwood at Louise’s home in February

Gardener Louise Wrinkle Receives National Honor

BIRMINGHAM’S OWN LOUISE AGEE WRINKLE received the 2019 Place Maker Award from the Foundation for Landscape Studies in New York. A revered name for those who know their way around a garden, Wrinkle has made a mark on Birmingham with her stewardship of the land that surrounds her immediate home and beyond. This prestigious award celebrates the extraordinary achievement that is her woodland garden, which she shares with readers in her book Listen to the Land. A scholar, advocate, teacher, and get-your-hands-dirty gardener, Wrinkle’s visual and literary memoir tells the story of her garden’s ever-evolving creation and her role as its interpreter. If Birmingham had a best-seller list, she’d be on it. As a Place Maker who has spent almost 40 years dedicated to the landscape, an active and distinguished member of The Garden Club of America, a Horticulture Judge for GCA and other shows, and a Founding Board Member of the Garden Conservancy, and having spent many years of service as a board member to the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens and Aldridge Gardens, Wrinkle gifts us the story of her garden and inspires us to listen to the land. Floral designer Sybil Sylvester says, “Whenever she has opened her gate for me and allowed me to cut a few blooms or take a tour, I feel as though I’m walking on hallowed ground. It’s a really special place.” Says Tom Underwood, executive director of the Friends: “This award reflects what those of us with a passion for the landscape know: Louise Wrinkle’s impact on her place, on our place, is indelible, and we are grateful for it.”  
—Francie MacDougall

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A generous gift from ITOCHU Coal Americas Inc. will be used toward enhancements, including the installation of a new lantern, in the Japanese Garden. Pictured are (at center) ICA President and CEO Kotaro Suzuki with (from left) ICA Manager Masaki Morioka, Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens Board Member D.C. Coston, ICA Director of Accounting Penny Parham, Friends Donor Relations Officer Drew Rickel, Friends Trustee John Floyd, and Friends Garden Assessment Project Leader Molly Hendry.
FAY BELT IRELAND
A True Perennial

THERE IS A CERTAIN POETIC BEAUTY in a tree you plant yourself. It grows in ways and directions you couldn’t anticipate no matter how much you trim or fertilize it. As it matures, you look at its stout trunk, the spread of the roots, the kaleidoscopic sun dappling the ground as it peeks through the tree’s enormous canopy, and you remember when and who you were when you planted and tended to this once-fragile plant that now thrives on its own and provides for those around it. We hope that Fay Belt Ireland looked at Birmingham Botanical Gardens in the same way, with profound pride at what has grown from her nurturing.

All around the Gardens are seeds she planted and helped to tend and grow to maturity. From the Ireland Iris Garden (named for her) that she started a potting shed group of volunteers that still exists today and now bears her initials: the “FBI Perennial Society.” The potting shed itself was upgraded, based on needs and her experience, through the funding of a new garage door, cushy floor mats, soil tables on motorized lifts, and even an ice machine. She also lent her knowledge and activism as the president of the Birmingham Botanical Society Auxiliary from 1983 to 1985, along with six additional years as a member of the Board of Directors.

Being a volunteer, board member, philanthropist, and plant enthusiast meant that Fay knew the importance of all aspects of the Gardens. From the obvious plant collections and the soil that feeds them to education and the volunteers who make it all work, Fay was the mechanic who knew how to service this intricate machine and all of the seemingly disparate parts to keep it moving forward and to maintain this unique urban oasis she held dear.

Fay Belt Ireland passed away in April, but Birmingham Botanical Gardens remains a monument to her memory as but one aspect of her life’s work. Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens and all those whose lives were and are enhanced by her vision and enthusiasm mourn her passing and aspire to fulfill the legacy she established for the good of this community.

—Drew Rikel
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A generous gift in memory of Gordon Dallam Martin from his children has made possible a new landscape planting at the south end of the Formal Garden. For giving and naming opportunities at the Gardens, contact Drew Rickel, donor relations officer, at 205.414.3955 or drickel@bbgardens.org.

Calla lilies in the Southern Living Garden

Thames Schoenvogel
Jessica & Ryan Sicacca
Cheryl & James Scott
Virginia Scruggs & Sarah Olson
Marshall McEuen & Kathleen Scudder
Judith & Ronald Seitel
Pamela & Patrick Selph
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Anne Stanfield
Mary Stanley
Jeremy Newsome & Carla Stefanescu
Hampton & Bart Stephens
David Shelby & Jamie Stephenson
Christianne Strang
Jera & William Stribling
Malcom Marler & Mary Bea Sullivan
Nathan English & Amy Swindle-English
Judy & George Taylor
Patti & Hal Tichenor
Alison & Michael Tomberlin
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Joseph Bullock & Sunaree Watson-Bullock
Jana & Tyler Watts
Diane & G. Allen Weatherford
Linda & William Weber
Mary & Robert White
Alice Wideman
Annette & Bentley Wilder
Beverly & Bruce Williams
Contact Drew Rickel, donor relations officer, at 205.414.3955 or drickel@bbgardens.org.

If we have inadvertently left your name out or incorrectly listed you, please accept our apologies and Benjamin and dedicated Japanese Garden volunteers and friends.

Dedication of the Dr. Bob Wendorf memorial landscape project surrounding the recently relocated Japanese lantern. Pictured are (at center) Margaret Wendorf and son Marc with Gardener Adam Benjamin and dedicated Japanese Garden volunteers and friends.

Travel with us to the gardens of New Zealand!

Gardens, Wine & Wilderness: A Tour of New Zealand
January 4–19, 2020—with Tom & Jane Underwood

RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY for this once-in-a-lifetime garden travel experience led by New Zealand-born landscape architect Richard Lyon!

Join Tom Underwood, executive director with the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, and his wife, Jane, director of operations with the Friends, for this exclusive, 16-day garden travel experience to explore the spectacular scenery, gardens, architecture, artwork, cuisine, and wines of New Zealand. You’ll enjoy the company and camaraderie of like-minded travelers while experiencing the country’s awe-inspiring beauty and warm hospitality.

The trip will be led by Richard Lyon of Garden Adventures. Richard, a New Zealand-born, Pennsylvania-based landscape architect, has been leading tours to New Zealand for nearly 30 years for prestigious horticultural organizations across the United States. His design experience and personal insights into New Zealand culture and scenery will make this an unforgettable visit. To learn more and reserve your spot, contact Penney Hartline, director of development for the Friends, at phartline@bbgardens.org or 205.414.3961.
“Exploring the Bruno Vegetable Garden fosters a sense of excitement and wonder and exposes our youngest visitors to the mindset of thinking about where their food comes from and how it’s grown.”  —GARDENER STEVEN KNOP