

Newsletter

April 2014

MOUNTAIN BROOK BOOK / EXHIBIT TO DEBUT AT EMMET O'NEAL LIBRARY

• APRIL 13 •

The Emmet O'Neal Library is the fitting setting on April 13 from 2-4 p.m., for the official debut of *Mountain Brook—A Historic American Landscape*, the newest publication from the Birmingham Historical Society (and the 2014 Members' Book). The volume's 80 pages present a visual record of Mountain Brook's creation—from the leadership of the local Jemison & Company real estate firm to the talent of planner and landscape architect Warren Manning. Manning, who traveled here many times during the late 1920s, was a national authority with a legacy that included 100 projects with the noted Frederick Law Olmsted Sr.

About the Book

The book draws largely from letters, drawings and plans from the Jemison Papers, housed in the Birmingham Public Library Archives. Maps, drawings and numerous photographs document the years from 1926 to 1929—the period of Mountain Brook's earliest design and development. The volume also addresses Mountain Brook's topography, Manning's careful use of floodplains, ridges and mountain crests, and the skilled thinking that led to the masterful network of roads weaving through a seemingly undisturbed residential landscape.

"What you see instantly through the drawings and plans is the careful professionalism and creative planning and execution that laid the foundation for the Mountain Brook we know today," says Marjorie White, BHS director who headed the book project. "We all know that Mountain Brook is gorgeous and this research shows us the deliberation and planning at the root of its excellence." She credits Birmingham landscape architect Birgit Kibelka and documentation specialist Richard K. Anderson Jr. of South Carolina



Overbrook Road, hugging the hillside and giving views across the golf course at Mountain Brook Club. Photograph by Jet Lowe, 2013. HALS No. AL-2-25.

as key players in the project. Contemporary photographs were provided by aerial and National Park Service photographers.

About the Exhibit

"The roads, bridges, entrances, and open spaces we cherish today began not haphazardly, but with the foresight and brilliance of a masterful design team," says White. "To appreciate and understand Mountain Brook is to look back at the early days of its development and the minds that conceived the spaces that are now so much a part of our everyday life."

Of particular interest are the roadways of Mountain Brook and the neighborhoods clustered around them, documented in the

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April Garden Workshop Features Common Cure-alls for Your Health

Join us in Grandmother's Garden at Sloss for a Saturday morning revival of the home garden pharmacy. Birmingham Historical Society and the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service (ACES) are sponsoring a workshop entitled *Home Garden Pharmacies* on April 26 from 9:30-12:30. The workshop will introduce participants to the long tradition of growing healing herbs at home through talks, tastings, plant identification, and growing tips. Workshop speakers will include historians, an herbalist and a horticulturalist. With a focus on medicinal herbs easily grown in Birmingham area home gardens, participants will leave inspired to carry on the age-old tradition of home health.

Grandmother had a cure for everything. Today, herbalists and historians remind us how health began at home, since forever. Both can help us learn how to grow healing herbs. Leading the workshop will be Phyllis D. Light, a fourth generation Alabama herbalist with 25 years of clinical practice (that began with questions to her Creek/Cherokee grandmother and traditional healer.) Light will share the *Southern Herbal Tradition* and her practice with herbal healing and

home garden medicinals. Archivist Jason Kirby will discuss Kitchen Garden practice during the Civil War. ACES agent Sallie Lee will teach us how to grow the featured herbs: aloe, dandelion, elderberry, hyssop, lemon balm, map pop, mullein, parsley, peppermint, rosemary, sage, thyme, and yarrow.

Pre-registration is required. To confirm your registration, send a check for \$30 to Birmingham Historical Society, One Sloss Quarters, Birmingham, AL 35222. For more information, contact Alabama Cooperative Extension Service (ACES), leesall@aces.edu, t. (205) 879-6964 x11.



Grandmother's Garden with roses, perennials, kitchen and medicine herbs and veggies.

REGISTRATION FOR THE HOME GARDEN PHARMACIES WORKSHOP Saturday, APRIL 26, 9:30-12:30, GRANDMOTHER'S GARDEN at Sloss

Name _____
 Street _____
 City _____ Zip _____ Fee of \$30 (Check ___ or Cash ___)
 Telephone c. _____ Email _____

Return form and check to Birmingham Historical Society, One Sloss Quarters, Birmingham, AL 35222. Workshop is limited to 30 persons. Your check is your reservation.

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exhibition *Perfectly Planned: Mountain Brook Roads and Scenic Views*, which runs April 13-May 14 in the Community Meeting Room of Emmet O'Neal Library. The exhibition will open as a highlight of the April 13 event that also includes remarks by Mountain Brook Mayor Terry Oden, White and Kibelka. In the exhibition, aerial and eye-level studies, plus archival documentation, show the deliberate development of Mountain Brook Parkway, Overbrook and Beechwood Roads, Surrey and Canterbury Roads (including Mountain Brook Village), Dell Road, Cherokee Road, and Southwood Road.

TO BUY: *Mountain Brook—A Historic American Landscape* is available by mail. Send checks to Birmingham Historical Society (\$35 postpaid for a single copy; \$280 for a box of 10). Also at the library on April 13 and on Amazon.com.

Veggie Garden to Feature "Soul Food"

Watermelon, black-eyed peas, yams, okra, collards, eggplant, and corn for grinding into meal and grits. Why do Southerners eat these veggies, often in stews and with rice?

The cultivars came to the Americas from Africa during the 300 years of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. These African staples were grown to provide food for the passage and also in sustenance gardens of African Americans in the New World. Thomas Jefferson documented the gardens of his slaves on his plantation at Monticello. Seeds for our veggie garden at Sloss come from the gardens there.



Master Gardeners-in-training Antonia Viteri, Mary McGlaughlin, Therese Mitchell, Linda Goode (front row, left to right), Jane Fike, Kitty Lineberry (rear, left to right), Sue Webb, Lisa Markham (not pictured), and Virginia White have adopted the veggie garden.

SOCIETY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 2-4 p.m., Remarks, 3 p.m.

Book Signing for

Mountain Brook—A Historic American Landscape

Exhibition Opening for

Perfectly Planned: Mountain Brook Roads and Scenic Views
Emmet O'Neal Library, 50 Oak Street, Mountain Brook.

APRIL 13-MAY 14

Perfectly Planned: Mountain Brook Roads and Scenic Views
Exhibition

Community Meeting Room, O'Neal Library

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 9:30-12:30

Home Garden Pharmacies

Workshop: talks, tastings, plant identification, growing tips with herbalist Phyllis Light, herb historian Jason Kirby, and ACES agent Sallie Lee
Grandmother's Garden at Sloss (\$30 fee)

SUNDAY, JULY 13, 2 p.m.

Living at Work: Sloss Style

Illustrated Talks by Sloss Curator Karen Utz and archaeologist Jun Ebersole

WEDNESDAYS, beginning 9 a.m., weather permitting,

Artists in the Garden.

Bring supplies and come paint and draw.

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST,

Grandmother's Garden Tours

Email Sallie Lee at leesall@aces.edu

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