Smithsonian Institution

Archives of American Gardens

Annual Report for 2015

for the Garden Club of America's Garden History and Design Committee

Smithsonian Institution Staff

- Barbara Faust, Associate Director, Smithsonian Gardens (SG), Office of Facilities Engineering & Operations (OFEO)
- Cindy Brown, Manager, Horticulture Collections Management and Education branch (HCME)
- Paula Healy } Museum Specialists,
- Joyce Connolly } HCME
- Kelly Crawford}

Cindy, Barbara, and Kelly (standing, l to r) with Joyce and Paula in the Folger Rose Garden adjacent to the Smithsonian Castle. Eric Long, photographer.

About the Archives of American Gardens

The Archives of American Gardens (AAG) is a large photographic archive managed by Smithsonian Gardens' Horticulture Collections Management and Education branch. The archives documents over 9,000 diverse gardens and cultural landscapes in America as well as other gardens that have influenced the roots of American garden design. Some gardens are represented by a single photograph while others are documented over the course of decades.

The *mission of the Archives is to collect and make available for research use unique, high-quality images of and documentation relating to a wide variety of cultivated gardens throughout the United States that are not documented elsewhere since historic, designed, and cultural landscapes are subject to change, loss, and destruction. In this way, AAG strives to preserve and highlight a meaningful compendium of significant aspects of gardening in the United States for the benefit of researchers and the public today and in the future.*

Fast Facts

- **34,927** AAG catalog records in SIRIS
- **9,308** gardens documented in the Archives of American Gardens
- **4,691** gardens documented in the GCA Collection
- **3,742** glass lantern slides in the GCA Collection
- **49** *GHD One Minute Reports* distributed by AAG since 2010
- **47** states represented in the GCA Collection (there are currently no gardens documented in Alaska, North Dakota or South Dakota)
- **42** collections included in the Archives of American Gardens (the GCA Collection is the largest)
- **21** GCA Garden History and Design Interns fully or partially funded by the GCA Scholarship Committee since the internship's establishment

Notable Highlights…

New Acquisitions by AAG

- The Summit (NJ) Garden Club donated 159 historic glass lantern slides to AAG in March. While planning for its 2016 centennial, the Summit GC assessed its archival holdings and decided that the best place for these images was AAG. A copy of an early membership roster from the club's archives accompanied the donation, providing invaluable information to AAG for cataloging purposes.

Joan White, Cindy Brown (AAG), Melissa Pflieger, and Mary Jewett (left) mark the donation of glass lantern slides from the Summit Garden Club to AAG. One of the historic slides (right) shows members of the Summit Garden Club, c. 1930s.

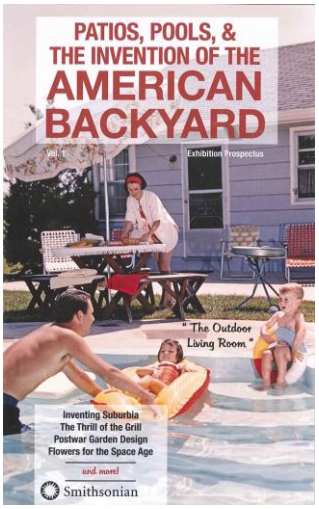
- Warrenton (VA) Garden Club President Ellen Soyars donated 19 glass lantern slides on behalf of her club to AAG in November. These slides document the grounds of the Warrenton Country School c. 1940s, later sold to the federal government.
- AAG is delighted to add both the Summit and Warrenton images to the 3,500+ lantern slides already in the GCA Collection at AAG. The plates will be cataloged and digitized in preparation for being added to the SIRIS catalog in the future.

The Warrenton GC glass slides were not hand-tinted like others in the GCA Collection. They were made using an early color photography process.

- A series of slide lectures created by Helen Rollins, one of the driving forces behind the creation of the Garden Club of America Collection, were donated by her daughters to AAG in November. These lectures document various aspects of garden history and well as extensive outreach efforts made by Mrs. Rollins to educate GCA clubs about the importance of documenting gardens for the GCA Collection in the years leading up to the formation of the GHD Committee.

American Garden Legacy Series Exhibit

- The Smithsonian *American Garden Legacy* exhibit, *Pools, Patios, and the Invention of the American Backyard*, started its 5-year run in March. It showcases the rise of mid-century gardens and features a number of images from the GCA Collection as well as other AAG collections.
- Former GHD Intern Kate Fox was contracted by AAG to research the topic and write an exhibit script.
- A blog on this exhibit was featured in *Pool & Spa News*.



AAG holdings featured in White House Historical Association exhibit

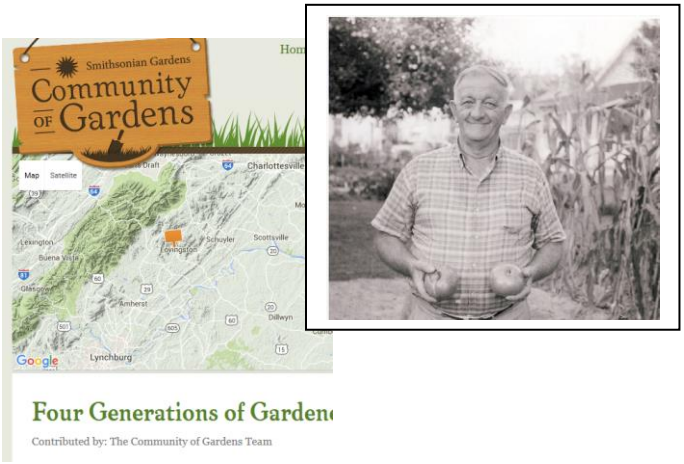
- Items from the Perry Wheeler Collection at AAG were loaned to the White House Historical Association for the recent exhibit, *The Kennedy Rose Garden: Traditionally American*.
- Wheeler, a landscape architect who designed several gardens in Washington, D.C.'s Georgetown neighborhood during the 1960s, worked with Bunny Mellon

on the design of the White House Rose Garden during the Kennedy administration.

Perry Wheeler (left) inspecting the White House Rose Garden, 1960s.

AAG Crowd-Sourcing Initiative

- *Community of Gardens*, the online archive of garden stories hosted by Smithsonian Gardens, has collected a total of 70 garden stories since its launch in 2014.



GCA Collection Submission Statistics for 2015

- 46 gardens were accessioned into the GCA Collection in 2015. The list of gardens is appended at the end of this report.

Marion's Garden in Stamford, Conn. and Riggs Garden in Scottsdale, Arizona, two of 46 gardens documented in the GCA Collection in 2015. Marion Glowka and Heidi Riggs, photographers.

A special thank you to those clubs that documented gardens for the GCA Collection in 2015…

Zone I: GC of Dublin
Zone II: Fairfield GC; GC of Hartford; New London GC; Sasqua GC; The Stamford GC
Zone IV: GC of Englewood; GC of Princeton; Short Hills GC
Zone V: GC of Allegheny County; Four Counties GC; The Garden Workers; GC of Philadelphia; Carrie T. Watson GC; Wissahickon GC
Zone VI: Georgetown GC; GC of Twenty
Zone VII: James River GC; Kanawha GC; The Tuckahoe GC of Westhampton; Twin Cities GC
Zone VIII: Founders GC of Sarasota; The GC of Halifax County; Late Bloomers GC; Red Mountain GC
Zone IX: Founders GC of Dallas; Garden Study Club of New Orleans; Greenville GC; Knoxville GC; Laurel GC; Magnolia GC; New Orleans Town Gardeners & (collaborative submission); River Oaks GC;
Zone X: GC of Cincinnati
Zone XI: Garden Guild of Winnetka; Westport GC
Zone XII: Carmel-by-the-Sea GC; Columbine GC; Hancock Park GC; Marin GC; GC of Santa Barbara

Cataloging Statistics

- All 46 of the gardens accessioned in 2015 have been cataloged. Representative images of each garden are or will shortly be available online in the SIRIS catalog at www.siris.si.edu.
- See the "Recent Acquisitions" page for a list of all the submissions to the GCA Collection added since 2008.

GHD Committee Meetings

GHD Committee Spring Meeting at GCA Headquarters in NYC, March 1-3

- Discussion topics at the meeting included changes to the GHD/AAG sections of the GCA website, revisions to the Procedures Manual for Submissions, and the GHD exhibit at the upcoming GCA annual meeting. In addition, ten new garden submissions were previewed.

GHD Committee Meeting at GCA Headquarters in NYC, June 1-2

- Vice Chair Marianne Salas previewed the newly redesigned GHD webpage on the GCA website. A streamlined Procedures Manual on the site includes hyperlinks to numerous AAG forms and policies, making it easier to find and retrieve specific documents.
- The meeting included a Q&A session devoted to garden submission issues.

GHD Committee Fall Meeting at AAG in Washington, D.C., Sept. 14-16

- This meeting, hosted by AAG, included a number of PowerPoint presentations by AAG staff that highlighted the history of the GCA Collection and reviewed garden documentation processes outlined in the Procedures Manual.
- Smithsonian Gardens horticulturist James Gagliardi (editor of the Smithsonian/DK book, *Encyclopedia of Garden Plants for Every Location*) gave a brief talk on his work with initiatives dealing with promoting pollinator gardens.

AAG hosted a dinner at the National Museum of the American Indian for the Garden History and Design Committee at the September meeting. The NMAI rooftop afforded wonderful views of the National Mall and the U.S. Capitol.

- The meeting included time for a tour of the landscape surrounding the American Indian Museum as well as the gardens at the home of the British ambassador in Washington.
- The meeting ended with previews of a number of garden submissions. These previews provide perfect opportunities to discuss garden submission guidelines and tips.

GCA Garden History and Design Internship

- Thanks to the GHD and Scholarship Committees, a GCA Garden History and Design summer intern was funded for AAG. AAG is particularly grateful to the Committees for their support and generosity—GHD Interns are a tremendous asset and help AAG immensely with the academic skill sets they bring.

- Kathryn Schroeder, who recently graduated with a Master's degree in Library Information Science with a specialization in Digital Content Management from Wayne State University in Detroit, joined AAG for a 10-week internship in May.
- Among the projects Kathryn worked on during her internship was cataloging scores of images from the GCA Collection for ready access in SIRIS, uploading digital images into the Smithsonian's Digital Asset Management System (DAMS), and writing GHD One Minute Reports and posts for social media outlets based on the AAG collections.

GHD Intern Kathryn Schroeder

- Interns benefit greatly from the GHD Internship—they gain practical skills required in the archives world including cataloging, digitization, research and reference, and outreach. In addition, they learn about the many ways in which garden history and design affect our lives every day. After completing an internship with AAG, several recent interns have quickly found professional positions. Thank you for supporting the next generation of archivists!

Special Projects

Mass Digitization Projects

- AAG staff worked with 2 outside vendors in 2015 on a series of 'rapid capture' digitization projects. These projects captured high resolution digital images of historic images using a copy stand set-up that is much more time efficient than a flatbed scanner, the only method otherwise available to AAG staff.
- 3,200+ fragile glass plate negatives from the Thomas Warren Sears Collection dating from the early 20th century were digitized, completing a pilot rapid capture project undertaken by AAG in August 2013. Sears was a landscape architect who started his career with the Olmsted Brothers firm and later opened his own practice in Philadelphia.
- 2,700+ historic photographs in the J. Horace McFarland Collection at AAG were digitized thanks to funding provided through a grant from the Smithsonian's Collections Care and Preservation Fund. McFarland's publishing firm, Mount Pleasant Press, specialized in printing seed and nursery catalogs during the first half of the 20th century.

An outside contractor digitized thousands of images with specialized equipment set up in AAG's reference room.

- The Summit (NJ) GC generously funded the digitization of the 159 historic glass plates it donated to AAG.

AAG Mystery Gardens

- The GCA Collection includes hundreds of unidentified images, ranging from the 1920s to the 1980s. Please urge your clubs to visit AAG's Mystery Gardens webpage if they haven't already. Without identifications, these images lack significant informational value. Be sure to contact AAG if you can solve any of these mysteries!

GHD Committee Director Liaison Mimsie Lanier identified this Mystery Garden image as the Athens, GA home of Hubert Bond Owens. Owens established the University of Georgia's landscape architecture program.

Interns, Research Assistant, Fellow and Volunteers

Smithsonian Gardens' Interns

- Smithsonian Gardens' Horticulture Collections Management and Education (HCME) branch (which AAG falls under) manages SG's very active intern program. In addition to the GHD Intern this year, 11 interns joined the various units of SG in 2015 for internships ranging from 10 to 16 weeks.

HCME Intern

- Melinda Allen, a graduate student working on a Master's in Library Science at Drexel University in Pennsylvania, joined AAG for a part-time internship during the winter semester. Melinda cataloged recent GCA Collection submissions into SIRIS and digitized historic letters from AAG's W. Atlee Burpee & Co. Collection for the Smithsonian Transcription Center. Once the letters are uploaded on the Transcription Center site, 'digital volunteers' are welcome to transcribe them to make it easier to search them.

Enid A. Haupt Fellowship in Horticulture

- Janie Askew, a former graduate research assistant at Smithsonian Gardens from the History of Decorative Arts program administered by The Smithsonian Associates and George Mason University, joined Smithsonian Gardens as the 2015 Enid A. Haupt Fellow in Horticulture. Janie researched Smithsonian Gardens' large collection of funerary wire frames as well as photographs and ephemera in AAG related to funerary floral arrangements from the Victorian era for her research topic, "Framing Grief: Nineteenth-Century Funeral Flower Frames."

AAG Volunteers

- Smithsonian volunteer Nancy Sahli celebrated her 16th anniversary with AAG in May. Over the years, she has cataloged thousands of images from the GCA Collection into SIRIS. Nancy's focus these days is identifying images in the

Thomas Warren Sears Collection, including those he took during trips to Europe in 1906 and 1908. She also identified dozens of sites documented in historic glass lantern slide images that originated from a GCA tour of Mexico in 1937. She was able to identify many of these views thanks to a detailed travelogue published in a *GCA Bulletin* shortly after the trip.

- Marca Woodhams, a volunteer of ten years, is the former librarian of the Smithsonian's Horticulture Library and instituted the earliest collections management policies for AAG which have successfully guided its operations for more than 25 years. During the year, Marca processed the portion of the Ken Druse Garden Photography Collection arranged by garden feature.
- Judith Lesser, a volunteer of six years, assists with cataloging new garden submissions in the GCA Collection. We have Judith to thank for her thorough review of submissions that yield excellent garden descriptions for SIRIS.

Research Inquiries

- AAG staff received a total of 240 requests from researchers for information in 2015; 71 (or 30%) of the queries involved holdings in the GCA Collection.
- A number of requests involved landscape historians researching different historic landscapes for restoration purposes and numerous scholars and writers researching gardens for books, articles, exhibitions and lectures.
- Of particular note are queries we received from:
  - garden owners and garden historians researching particular properties
  - writers, professors, students, biographers, genealogists
  - staff from public gardens and historic house museums
- In addition, AAG staff handled a number of inquiries from GCA members and GHD Reps, some of whom were writing articles for the *GCA Bulletin* or their club newsletters, putting together presentations or reports for their clubs or GCA Headquarters, or asking about the holdings for specific gardens in the GCA Collection.

Use of GCA Collection Images

- In 2015, gardens documented in the GCA Collection were cited or images reprinted in a number of publications including the following:
  - *Chicago and Its Botanic Garden: The Chicago Horticultural Society at 125* by Cathy Jean Maloney
  - *The Artist's Garden: American Impressionism and the Garden movement, 1887-1920* by Dr. Anna O. Marley
  - spring issue of *The Olmstedian*, the newsletter of the Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks and Landscapes, featured a historic autochrome view (*right*) of AAG Garden #MD009 Rusty Rocks in Baltimore

- Smithsonian Libraries blog dated June 22 featured a glass lantern slide from the GCA Collection

Gardens in the News

- The Cultural Landscape Foundation designated AAG Garden #MA356 Spalding Garden in Milton, Mass.—designed by Fletcher Steele--as an 'at-risk' garden in danger of being destroyed
- online article in March 11 issue of *Toledo Chronicle*, *Tama News-Herald* on AAG Garden #IA014 Cottage-in-the-Meadow Gardens
- online article in the July 19 issue *Charleston (WV) Gazette-Mail* about GCA volunteers documenting AAG Garden #WV019 Jones Garden in Charleston, WV for AAG
- article in Oct. 28 online issue of *The Baltimore Sun* highlighting the Hubbard garden in Baltimore, MD (AAG Garden #MD188 documented in 1995-1996)
- article in Dec. 30 issue of *Valley News* highlighting the garden of Bill Noble in Norwich, VT (AAG Garden #VT011 documenting in 2008)

Outreach and Public Relations

Smithsonian Institution

A Garden History & Design ***One Minute Report*** *from the Archives of American Gardens (AAG)*

Like a number of features documented in the Garden Club of America Collection at the Archives of American Gardens, wellheads once served a utilitarian purpose but are now used as a decorative garden element. Dating as far back as the Middle Ages, wellheads were common in Europe, especially Venice, Italy. For centuries, Venice was dependent on wells to supply fresh water to its citizens. Around every well was a wellhead acting as a curb, protecting the valuable freshwater. By 1858 the number of wellheads in Venice, both public and private, totaled approximately 7,500. Creating these wellheads became an art form with sculptors carving intricate designs into the stone. By the end of the nineteenth century an aqueduct connected Venice to a freshwater supply and the city was no longer dependent on wells, or wellheads, for its water.

Hearst Castle, San Simeon, CA. May 1990. Eleanor C. Weller, photographer.

Wellheads: from Functional Object to Decorative Feature

Haskell Garden, New Bedford, MA. June 2001. John S. Penney, Jr., photographer.

A Dallas Family Garden, Dallas, TX. March, 2009. Elsie Norman Dunklin, photographer.

Using previously functional wellheads as a decorative garden feature began shortly after there was no longer a vital need for them. In the United States the trend started when affluent Americans traveled abroad and saw attractive and elaborate examples. At the time, antiques were in high demand thanks to the popularity of formal Italianate gardens and many Americans returned home with wellheads purchased from art dealers to incorporate into their gardens. Due to their popularity, the supply of Venetian wellheads dwindled. This prompted American firms such as Tiffany & Co. to begin producing and selling their own versions. Though they no longer serve the function for which they were originally created, garden owners still find purpose for wellheads by turning them into unique focal points and planters.

Images from the Garden Club of America Collection at the Archives of American Gardens. By Kathryn Schroeder, AAG/GCA Garden History and Design Intern. July 2015.

- The following new AAG GHD Minutes were distributed to the GHD Committee in 2015. All are available on the GHD webpage:
  - A Honey of an Idea: Bee Skeps (March)
  - Heavy Metal: Cast Iron vs. Wrought Iron (April)
  - A Kaleidoscope of Garden Images (May)
  - Wellheads: from Functional Object to Decorative Feature (July)
  - History Solves the Mystery (October)
- AAG is one of several Smithsonian archives that contribute to the Smithsonian's Collection Search Center blog. The following blogs were posted by AAG in 2015:
  - How Do I Compare Thee To a Burpee Seed: The 1924 Burpee Contest Inspired Poetry (April)
  - Greenhouses as a Therapeutic Tool in Veterans' Homes and Hospitals (July)
  - Swimming Pools in America (July)
- SG staff presented a litany of educational programming and outreach activities throughout the year in a variety of venues including numerous garden tours, lectures, presentations and how-to workshops.
  - Cindy led a sold-out Smithsonian Associates tour to the Philadelphia Flower Show in March. Both she and Smithsonian Gardens' Director, Barbara Faust, also served as judges at the show.
  - Joyce was quoted in an online article in *State-By-State Gardening* on historic seed catalogs posted in March.

- Cindy led two travel tours of the gardens at Mount Cuba and Winterthur for The Smithsonian Associates in April.
- Smithsonian Gardens celebrated its annual Garden Fest in conjunction with National Public Gardens Day on May 8. The focus of this year's Garden Fest was pollinators. AAG staff manned a table featuring images of pollinator gardens from the GCA Collection.

Examples of butterfly and bee houses featured at Smithsonian Gardens' 2015 Garden Fest.

- In June Cindy gave two lectures at New London, Connecticut's Lyman Allyn Art Museum in conjunction with the exhibit, *Lost Gardens of New England*.
- SG and the National Museum of American History co-hosted a highly successful *Food in the Garden* series. Over the course of four weeks, hundreds of participants attended weekly panel discussions/garden tours with experts; the program theme was 'Seeds of Innovation.'
- Cindy developed a weekly *Let's Talk Gardens* program of lunchtime talks and demonstrations in the Smithsonian's Enid A. Haupt Garden.
- Interns from the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania toured AAG in October.

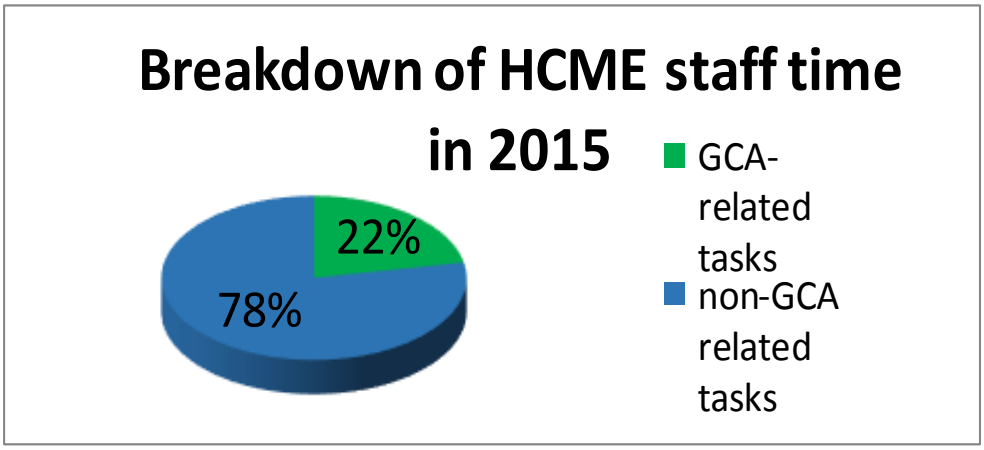
- The *Smithsonian Gardens Newsletter* comes out every quarter with articles on what AAG and the other units of Smithsonian Gardens are up to. To sign-up for this e-newsletter, please email gardens@si.edu .

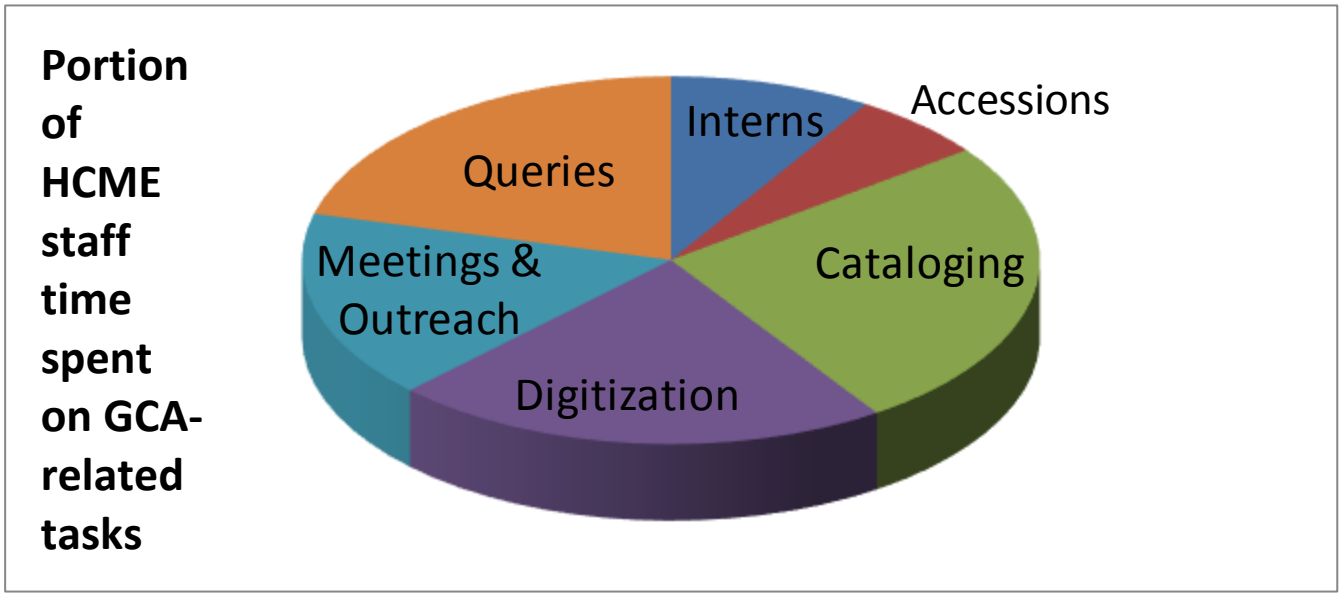
AAG Administration

AAG Staffing

- Smithsonian Gardens' Horticulture Collections Management and Education branch (HCME) has 4 staffers (Kelly, Joyce, Cindy, and Paula) whose responsibilities include working on tasks relating to the Garden Club of America Collection at the Archives of American Gardens. In 2015, the estimated amount of time spent by HCME staffers on GCA-related activities ranged from 10% to 40% of their time; this factored out to roughly 22% of total HCME staff time over the course of the year.
    - This calculation includes 200 hours of cataloging work performed by a contractor who was hired by AAG with funds from its baseline budget. The part-time contractor cataloged gardens and images from

the GCA Collection for access via the Smithsonian's online catalog, SIRIS.





- HCME staff spend their 'non-GCA' time on a wide variety of tasks and projects including processing, cataloging, and digitizing other AAG collections; reference and duplication services; developing SG's educational programming; managing SG's Garden Furnishings & Horticultural Artifacts Collection; administering SG's intern, volunteer, and fellow programs; developing policies; compiling reports; contributing to SG's social media efforts; event collaboration with other Smithsonian units; managing related contracts; writing grant applications; and purchasing.

List of Gardens added to the Garden Club of America Collection at the Archives of American Gardens in 2015			
AAG Garden #	**City**	**Garden Name**	**GCA Club**
AL047	Birmingham	Page Garden, Ruffner	Red Mountain GC
AZ003	Phoenix	Las Palmas Altas	Columbine GC
AZ025	Paradise Valley	Harold Garden	Columbine GC
AZ026	Paradise Valley	Papp Garden	Columbine GC
AZ027	Scottsdale	Riggs Garden	Columbine GC
CA605	Carmel-by-the-Sea	City Hall, Constance Meach Ridder Memorial Garden	Carmel-by-the-Sea GC
CA606	Montecito	Frog Hollow	GC of Santa Barbara
CA607	Los Angeles	La Casa de las Campanas (The House of the Bells)	Hancock Park GC
CA608	Montecito	Tobey Residence	GC of Santa Barbara
CA609	Ross	Quail Hill	Marin GC
CT100	Farmington	Oldgate	GC of Hartford
CT140	Waterford	Enders Heart Garden, The Harriet Whitmore	New London GC
CT736	Stamford	Marion's Garden	The Stamford GC
CT737	Fairfield	Farmwood	Fairfield GC
CT743	Fairfield	The Rossetti Garden	Sasqua GC
DC113	Washington	O Street, Georgetown Garden	Georgetown GC
FL256	Daytona Beach	Toronito	The GC of Halifax County & Late Bloomers GC
FL257	Longboat Key	Sands Point Condominium	Founders GC of Sarasota (with assistance from Late Bloomers GC)
FL258	Ponte Vedra	Ponte Vedra Dunes	Late Bloomers GC
IL182	Winnetka	Garden of Many Circles	Garden Guild of Winnetka
KS035	Mission Hills	LL's Garden	Westport GC
LA103	New Orleans	Greenbough	New Orleans Town Gardeners & Garden Study Club of New Orleans
MD277	Owings Mills	Mrs. Hathaway's Garden	GC of Twenty
MS065	Greenville	Bradley Garden, The	Greenville GC
MS066	Laurel	Jefcoat Garden	Laurel GC
NH114	Dublin	Lewis Garden	GC of Dublin
NJ668	Short Hills	Repton	Short Hills GC
NJ669	Alpine	Grey House	GC of Englewood
NJ670	Princeton	Stony Wood Garden	GC of Princeton
NC098	Winston-Salem	Arbor, The	Twin Cities GC
OH252	Cincinnati	Bentley Garden, John & Helene - Arrowhead Hill	GC of Cincinnati
PA213	Philadelphia	Krisheim	Wissahickon GC

List of Gardens added to the Garden Club of America Collection at the Archives of American Gardens in 2015			
AAG Garden #	**City**	**Garden Name**	**GCA Club**
PA730	Erie	Stoneybroke Acres	Carrie T. Watson GC
PA739	Sewickley	Topiary Folly	GC of Allegheny County
PA740	Wilkinsburg	Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery	GC of Allegheny County
PA753	Pittsburgh	Cherrytree House	GC of Allegheny County
PA754	Villanova	Gardens of Red Rose	The Garden Workers
PA755	Haverford	Thomas Country Garden	GC of Philadelphia
PA816	King of Prussia	Longview Hill	Four Counties GC
TN086	Knoxville	Siler Garden	Knoxville GC
TX126	Beaumont	Birdwell Garden	Magnolia GC
TX127	Houston	Simmons Garden, The	River Oaks GC
TX128	Dallas	Serendipity	Founders GC of Dallas
VA450	Richmond	Robin Hill	James River GC
VA451	Richmond	Westhampton Cottage Garden	The Tuckahoe GC of Westhampton
WV019	Charleston	Jones Garden	Kanawha GC

List of Mystery Gardens ‘solved’ by clubs in 2015			
NJ202	Princeton	Grey Shutters	GC of Princeton
NJ205	Princeton	Garden of James M. and Janet R. Hester	GC of Princeton