



ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN GARDENS

All Things Photography

GCA Garden History & Design Committee

September 2016

This presentation covers:

- **EQUIPMENT/SETTINGS**
- **CAPTURING THE BEST IMAGES**
- **INFORMATION THAT'S NEEDED FOR EACH IMAGE**
- **DELIVERY OF IMAGES TO AAG**
- **USING IMAGES**

Review these requirements *before* starting a garden submission

- Think 'front-end' prep work
- By the time a submission is completed it's too late to incorporate much of this guidance if it hasn't been already



Community Gardens at Edgerton Park, New Haven, CT. 2001. David G. Carter, photographer.

Things to consider before taking on a digital submission

- Is there a DSLR camera available to photograph the garden and is the photographer well versed in how to use it?
- Is the person processing the images familiar with how to use a computer and how to move images off the camera?
- Is there someone from the club's Photography Committee to consult for technical guidance?



DIGITAL CAMERA STANDARDS

AAG Digital Submission Policy

- Outlines minimum standards for digital files
- Digital images need to start out as robust digital files
- Standards are in place to help ensure:
 - images are of a high enough resolution to be used for publications, exhibits, etc.
 - AAG is responsibly expending Smithsonian resources to preserve these images in the long-term

Smithsonian Institution

Archives of American Gardens
Digital Submission Policy
Updated July 2016

Digital images intended for the Archives of American Gardens must meet the **minimum standards** outlined below to be considered for permanent retention.

Digital Camera Minimum Standards	
 = YES USE A DIGITAL SINGLE-LENS REFLEX (DSLR) CAMERA Example: Canon EOS Rebel T3i	 = NO DO NOT USE A TYPICAL COMPACT OR POINT AND SHOOT CAMERA Example: Canon <u>PowerShot Elph</u>
EXCEPTIONS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Micro Four Thirds Camera• Large sensor compact cameras	
What is the difference between a point and shoot camera and a DSLR camera? The sensor size. Why is a camera's sensor size important? http://www.qizmaq.com/camera-sensor-size-guide/26684/	
Why are standards important? The Archives of American Gardens invests a substantial amount of its resources into preserving the collections it acquires. These minimum standards help ensure that digital files are viable for long-term preservation and can be used for standard museum purposes (including publications and exhibitions).	
Please contact AAG staff at aag@si.edu or (202) 633-5840 if you have any questions about whether or not your camera meets AAG's minimum standards.	

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AAG's 1st Digital Submission

Summer Duck Wood, Rapidian, VA. 1998.
Mary Carter McConnell, photographer.

Camera Type - DSLR

- **DSLR** (digital single-lens reflex) model
- At least **22mm sensor** size
 - Check the sensor size of any camera on the Digital Photography Review's website at www.dpreview.com/reviews/specs.asp, by looking up your camera model under "Camera Database"
- Four Thirds cameras also acceptable
- 'point and shoot' cameras have very tiny sensors
 - Smaller sensors mean smaller pixel sites in a concentrated area which mean lower quality images



Future Digital Developments

- Digital technology changes at a rapid pace
- AAG will review the *Digital Submission Policy* each year to determine what changes and updates can be made





DIGITAL CAMERA SETTING STANDARDS

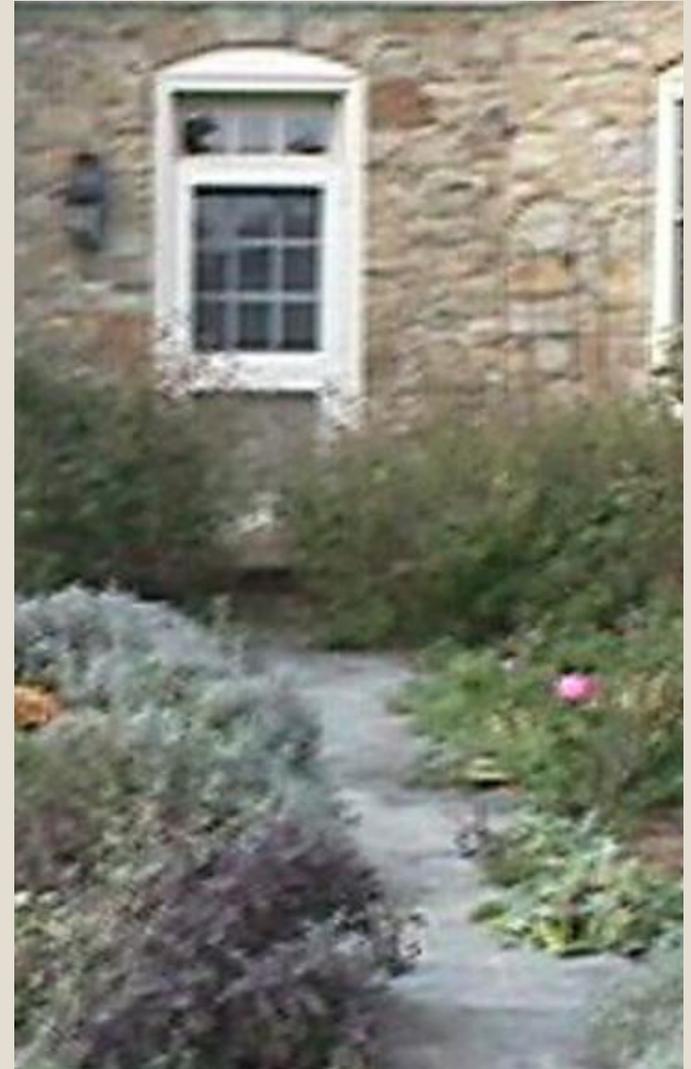
Camera Setting – File format

- Set camera to shoot in RAW or Highest JPEG Setting (JPEG Fine)
- RAW images are “unprocessed” files, the equivalent of a “digital negative”
 - Professional photographers often shoot in RAW
 - If you are an amateur photographer, shoot in TIFF or the highest JPEG setting



Camera Setting – Image format

- Choose an Image Size setting **at least 3,000 pixels** (or higher) on the image's longer side
- Some examples:
 - 3008 x 2000 - OK
 - 4896 x 3672 - OK
 - 1450 x 900 - NOT OK
- Smaller files (i.e. less than 3,000 pixels on the long side) are unsuitable for publications, exhibits, etc.
- Once a digital image is shot, you can't make it bigger (i.e. add more pixels to it)
- Any image less than 2MB in size will be rejected!





DIGITIZING ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Digitizing Original Photographs

- Some garden owners have older photographic prints that document their gardens over time
- Entire submissions may only have 'historic' images that document a 'lost' garden
- While AAG prefers original photographs to be submitted to the Archives, scans of 'historic' images from the garden owner's personal archives are acceptable



Middlegate Japanese Gardens,
Pass Christian, MS. 1962.
Frank Evans Farwell, photographer.

Minimum Requirements for Digitizing Original Photographs

Scanned Images

Options for Scanning Original Photographs or 35mm Slides		
<i>If a garden owner does not wish to transfer original photographs or 35mm slides with the submission materials to the Smithsonian, the images may be digitized on a flatbed or slide scanner and saved to a CD. (Duplicate photo prints are also accepted if scanning is not a feasible option.)</i>		
Resolution	- 300dpi/ppi at a minimum for all images - 600dpi/ppi is preferred for photographs	
File Format	TIFF (preferred)	JPEG at the highest quality setting (also accepted)
Compression	None	All JPEGs are automatically compressed
Compression Ratio	N/A	Excellent or Highest Image Quality
Minimum Image Size	Preferred: Large Approximately 3,000 to 4,000 pixels on image's long side Also accepted: Medium Approximately 2,100 to 2,400 pixels on image's long side	

Digitizing Original Photographs

Please remember to:

- Caption these images
- Determine if the photographer is known or unknown
- If photographer is known, obtain a release
- Assign unique numbers to these images in addition to any contemporary images that are submitted



The Grace Edwards Garden, Beverly, MA.
c. 1950s. From the Lois W. Poinier Collection.



DIGITAL PROCESSING AND FILE-SAVING STANDARDS

Quick Overview: Converting Camera Raw Files

- RAW images must be processed as TIFFs
- AAG does not accept RAW image files at this time

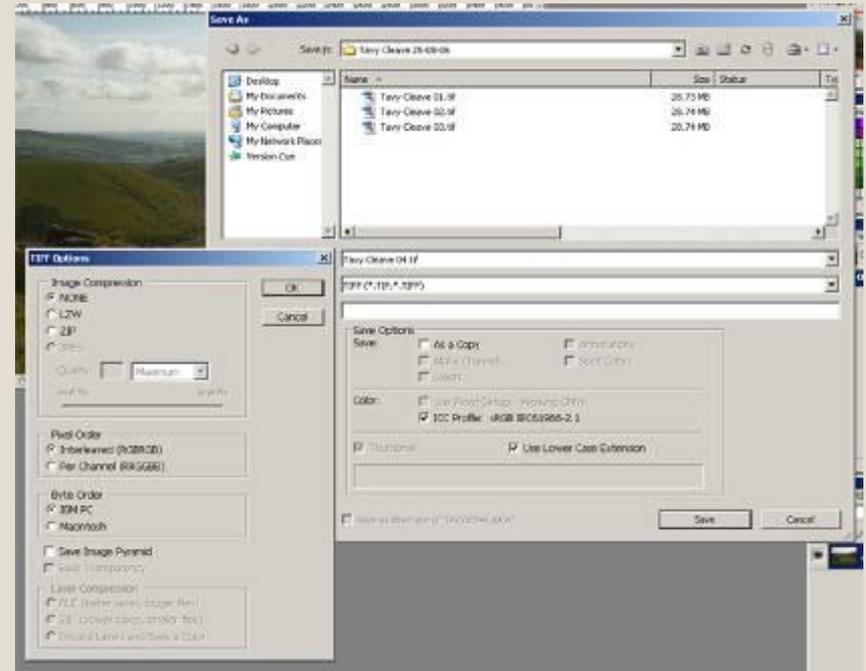


Image Processing: Accepted Minor Adjustments

- RAW Image Processing:
 - minor overall tonal or color adjustments to reflect actual conditions
 - cropping
- JPEG Image Processing:
 - cropping (only)
- AAG digital images are considered visual evidence for the historic record. It is critical that documentation be authentic.



Image Processing: Prohibited Adjustments

- Erasing or “Photoshopping” in or out garden features
- ‘Manipulated’ images
- Changing dimensional proportions
- AAG maintains documentation on actual gardens, not *invented* ones

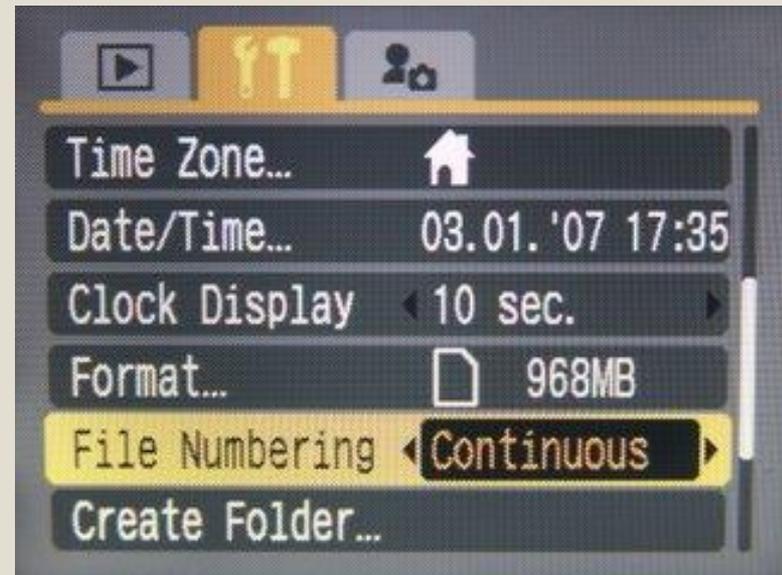


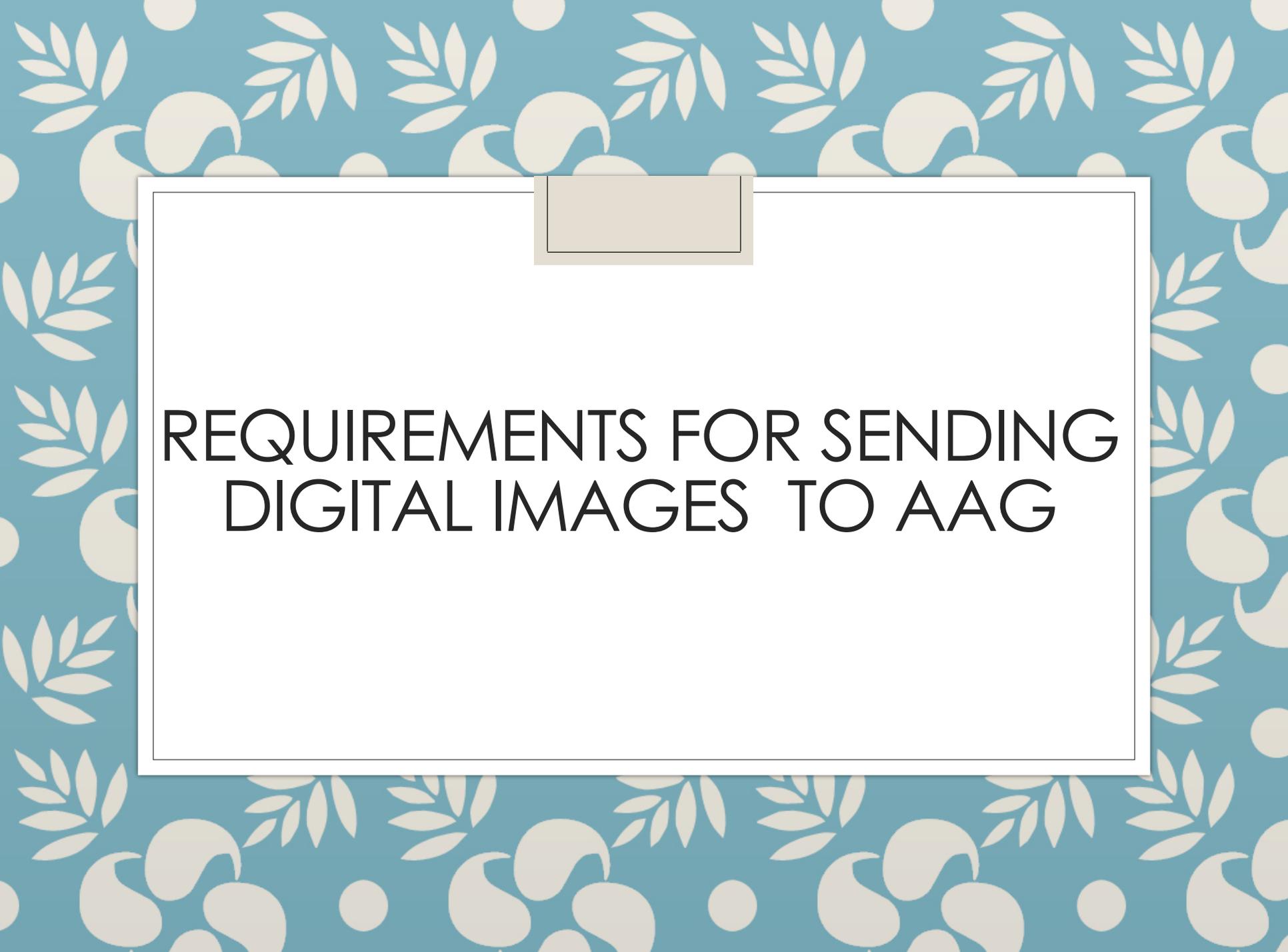
Numbering the Digital Files

- After selecting images for submission, rename each digital file with image #, garden name, date and photographer

Examples:

- 001_SmithGarden_2016July15_SmithsonJames
- 002_SmithGarden_2016July15_SmithsonJames
- Do not rename .jpg file extensions to .tif—this will make the file unreadable
- File names & numbers must correspond with entries on Image Caption List and Image View Plan





REQUIREMENTS FOR SENDING DIGITAL IMAGES TO AAG

Delivery Method

- Download images onto disk(s) or flash drive(s)
 - Name brand or Gold Quality disks
 - DVD-R's have more storage than CD-R's

- Do NOT create separate folders for digital images on disk or flash drive!



Other things to keep in mind

- Do NOT write on or label disk
 - Label CD case or insert paper label into case
- AAG continues to accept 35mm slide and slide/digital 'hybrid' submissions



Before a submission goes to AAG...

- Club should save a copy of submission images as back-up
 - Some disks sent to AAG have been damaged in the mail !
- If you want to preview a garden submission at an upcoming GHD Committee meeting:
 - Either hang onto submission until it is previewed OR make a copy of images, garden description, captions, etc. before sending to AAG
 - Make low-res .jpg copies on a separate disk or flash drive for previewing if they are larger than 2MB
 - Large files take a loooooooooong time to open on a laptop

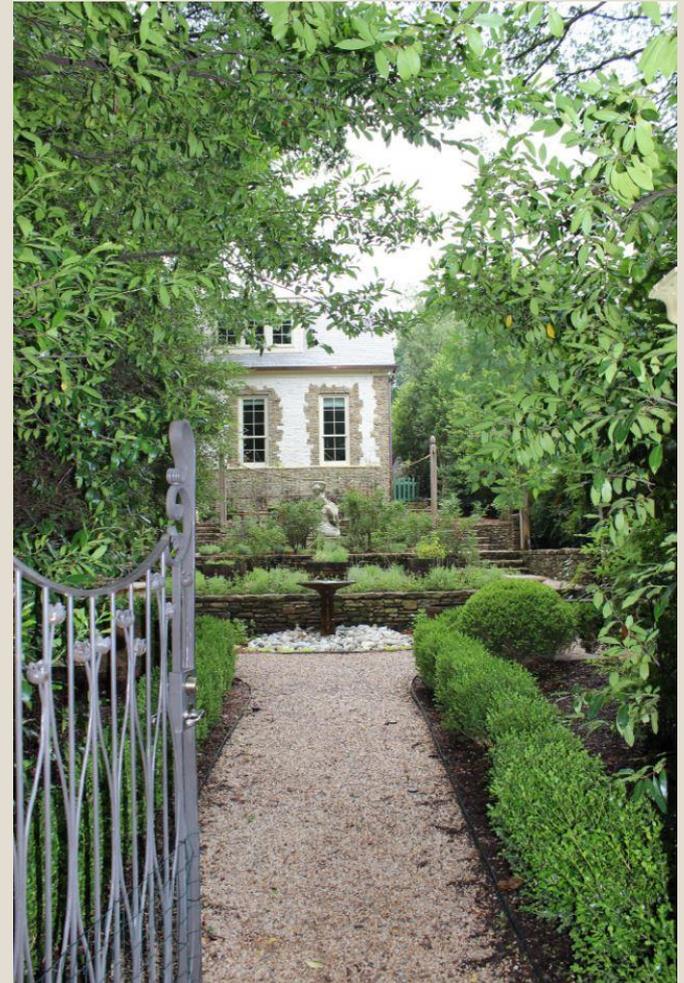




PHOTOGRAPHING GARDENS
FOR GCA COLLECTION

Composition (a.k.a. do some homework first)

- Walk through the garden before taking any photos to get a feel for the space
 - Visit the site at different times of the day or even seasons to determine the best lighting and seasonal features
- Look for vantage points like a terrace or second story window
- When photographing, start from the entrance of the garden and make your way through and around the space(s)
 - Tell the story of the garden as you move through it -- show what makes it special



Serendipity, Dallas, TX. May 2015.
Elsie Norman Dunklin, photographer.

Tips

- Photograph from different perspectives
- Keep the horizon level
- Don't crop the composition so closely that it loses its design context
- Turn off camera's date feature



Brush Hill Gardens, Washington, CT, June 1999.
Barbara Paul Robinson, photographer.

Lighting

- Early morning is often the best time to photograph a garden
- Avoid taking pictures mid-day in sunny locations to cut down on excessive shade
- Do not point camera directly into the sun
- 'dappled' shade is ok; 'high noon' shade is not



Palm Beach Garden, Florida, March 2008.
Joan R. Van Der Griff, photographer.

Provide Design Context

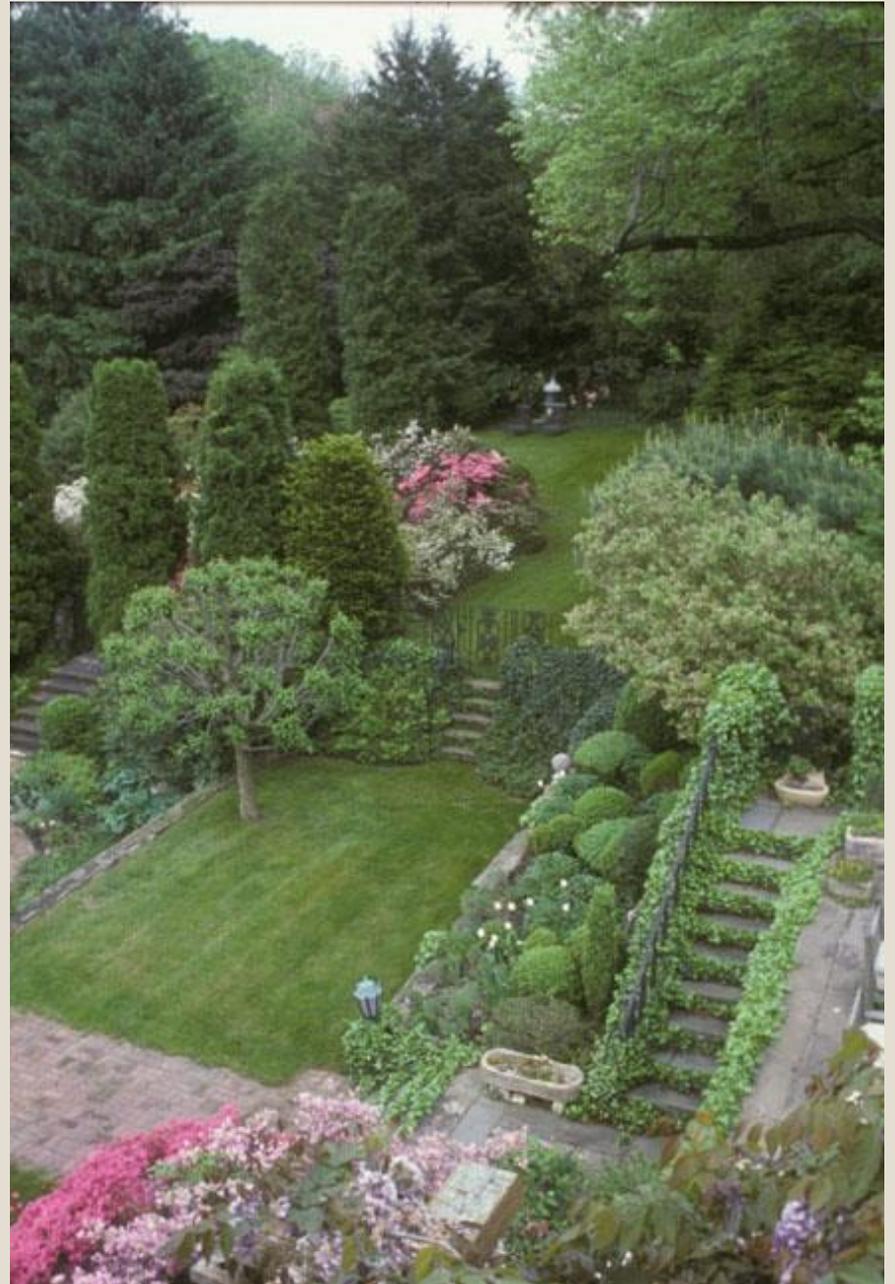
- Take a mix of wide views and more detailed shots
- If the garden owner is amenable, photograph the garden as it relates to the house



Meadow Rue, Asheville, NC. June 2013.
Susan Kosma, photographer.

Perspective

- A view from a high vantage point helps show the overall garden design



Nuages, Glenside, PA. May 2003.
Emilie S. Lapham, photographer.

Garden Details

- Details of garden features like fountains, furniture, plant containers, or hardscape are encouraged
- Make sure to capture enough context to show how the feature fits in the garden's design



The Frierson's Hidden Retreat, New Orleans, LA.
March 2012. Laura C. Williams, photographer.

For Every Season...

- Photographing a garden in different seasons can show dramatic changes
- Not mandatory, but highly encouraged



Lowrey Garden, Greenville, SC.
Pedrick Lowrey, photographer.

Capture the garden's full story

- All of a garden's elements help tell its story
 - garden rooms
 - paths
 - structures
 - ornamental features
 - 'hidden,' often utilitarian, spaces



Belvidere, Swarthmore, PA. c. 2005.
Andrew Bunting, photographer.

People in the Garden

- AAG Subject Release needed in instances where someone can be identified in an image
- Close-ups of children will not be added to SIRIS. They may, however, be retained in the archives



Can anyone in this image be identified?

Things to Avoid in Photography



deep shadow



washed out

Things to Avoid in Photography



not in focus



Lack of garden context

Things to Avoid in Photography



horticultural details

* rather, show plants in context of
garden's design >>>

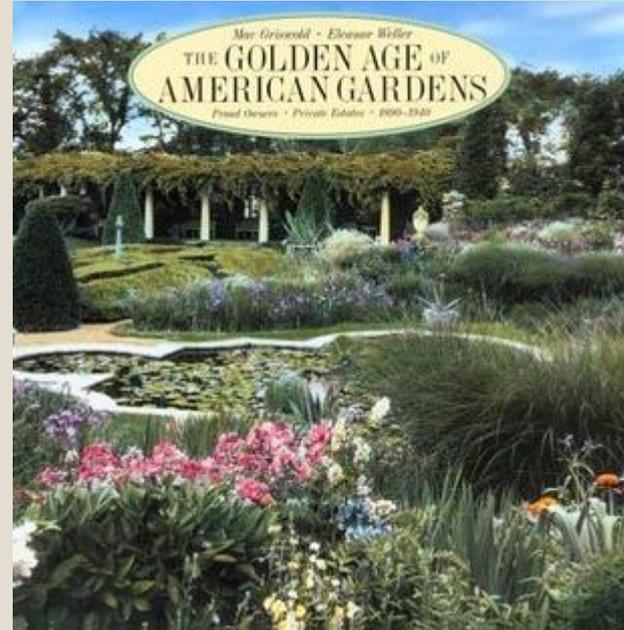


Baby Boomer Retirement Garden, Litchfield, CT. July
2011. Thomas W. & Elaine G. Witherspoon, photogs.

Things to Avoid in Photography



house numbers



images from books,
magazine articles, other
repositories, etc.

- Photocopies or bibliographic citations are welcome

The Not So Good, the Bad, and the Rejected

- digital files that do not meet minimum standards outlined in *AAG Digital Submission Policy*
- deep shadows or high contrast in lighting
- out of focus
- garden features shown without garden design context
- primary focus is on non-garden elements
- horticultural details
- redundant views





DOCUMENTATION

Choosing Images to Submit to AAG

- Identify the best, most informative images
- Edit out images that:
 - have quality issues
 - duplicate other images for the most part
 - do not provide valuable information
 - focus on horticultural or non-garden details

Editing down numerous digital images is especially important

How many images does it take to document a garden?

It takes what it takes!



Jones Valley Urban Farm, Birmingham, AL.
May 2009. Heather McWane, photographer.

Numbering Images

- each image must get an image number
 - both contemporary and scanned images
 - whole numbers only!
 - avoid decimals, letters, parallel lists of contemporary and historic images, etc.
- each image number must key into both the:
 - Image Caption List
 - Image View Plan



Generate an Image Caption List

Captions are Critical!

For each image:

- provide a descriptive caption
 - explain in detail what the image shows (features, uses, challenges, solutions, etc.)
 - point out details, plantings, etc.
 - think about what a garden historian would want to know a century from now
 - don't assume anything!
- date photo was taken
- photographer

AAG catalog records are only as good as the caption information that is supplied!



Newington, Sewickley, PA. May 2008.

Diane Viall, photographer.

Bryant Fleming, L.A. designed this yew garden in 1906. The hedges have been clipped in the shape of "Hershey Kisses," most appropriate for a Pennsylvania garden.

Image Caption List Lacking Important Details

Doesn't have:

- detailed description
- date
- photographer

Slide List – Hazel's Haven

1. Entrance courtyard with wall fountains.
2. Covered entry with well head.
3. Another view of the entrance courtyard.
4. Round Garden and birdbath.
5. Patio, benches, and container plantings.
6. Perennial garden, path, and arbors.
7. Lily pond and seating area.
8. Kitchen herb garden.
9. Ivy and rose-covered arbor.
10. Fire pit and seats surrounded by arbor.
11. Holly and flower bed.
12. Wall fountain.

Better, Descriptive Captions

Have:

- detailed description
- date
- photographer

PIERCE GARDEN IMAGE LIST

Elsie N. Dunklin, Photographer

001 A view of the front of the house facing Tulip Lane. Roses are enclosed in raised railroad ties. Roses left of the entry walk are (left to right) *Gina Lollobrigida*, *Rose Rhapsody*, *Jardin de Bagatelle*, and *Alec's Red*. On right side of entry walkway and closest to walkway are (left to right) *Victor Borge*, *Canary Diamond*, *Sweet Surrender*, *Out of Africa*, *Veteran's Honor*, *Polar Star*, *Lanvin*, and *Velvet Fragrance* (dark red.) May 5, 2014

002 A view from the corner of Edgemere Road and Tulip Lane. Raised rose beds enclosed with railroad ties on left of picture feature yellow, orange and pink multicolor *Sun King* and red *Royal William*. Red roses on right are *Trojan Victory*. May 5, 2014

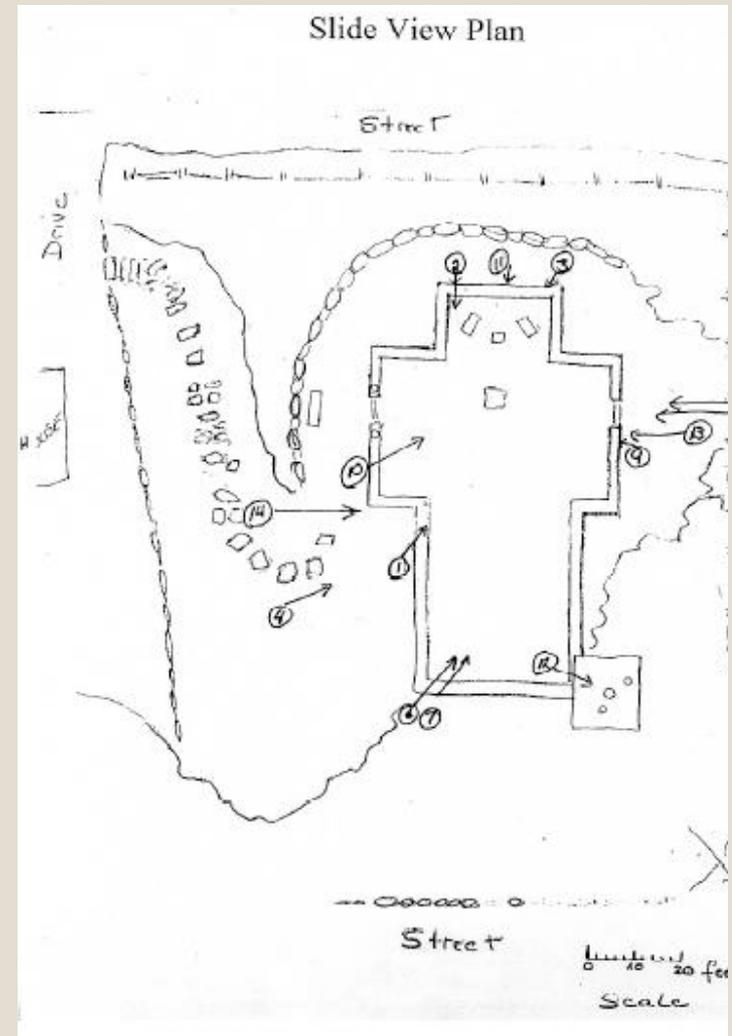
003 As seen from Edgemere Road, we see a series of raised eight foot railroad tie enclosed rose beds. The red rose in the back on the left is *Marilyn Wellan*. The pink and orange roses in the middle are *Dream Time* (pink) and *Dara* (orange.) The owner propagated *Dream Time* from cuttings. *Dara* won "King of Show" in the Dallas Rose show in 2004. Yellow rose on right is *St Patrick*. May 5, 2014

004 A view from Edgemere Road looking inside the fence showing two eight foot railroad tie enclosed rose beds close to the corner of the guest house. May 5, 2014

005 Three separate raised beds enclosed with railroad ties feature *Crimson Glory*, *Exotica* and *Hopie Girl*. May 5, 2014

Image View Plan

- Indicates where images were taken
 - numbers should key directly to Image Caption List
- Range of quality is perfectly o.k.



Historic Images

Still need to supply:

- Image number that's keyed into Image Caption List and Image View Plan
- descriptive caption
- date (circa date if unknown)
- photographer (if known)



Mrs. Walter Douglas in her garden.
Aranjuez, Phoenix, AZ, 1941.
Photographer unknown.

Submitting a Garden to AAG

- By the time a garden submission is ready for review by a GHD Zone Rep, its photography components are already in place
 - digital camera used
 - pixel size of digital files
- That said, please review the submission to make sure that each image is numbered, captioned, charted on an Image View Plan, & its photographer identified
 - make and model of DSLR noted on Photographer Release(s)
- Contact AAG if you have any questions

*'the genie's out
of the bottle'*



Additional Guidance

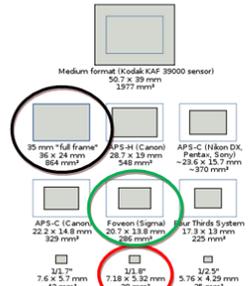
- AAG Digital Submission Policy
- GHD One Minute Reports

 **Smithsonian Institution**

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

Since the Archives of American Gardens' *Digital Submission Policy* was implemented in January 2009, AAG has seen the rate of digital garden submissions explode. It is not difficult to imagine a day in the not so distant future when *all* the garden images that AAG receives are born digital.

I can use any digital camera to document gardens for the Archives of American Gardens, right? *WRONG!*



AAG's *Digital Submission Policy* defines the minimum standards that DSLR (Digital Single Lens Reflex) cameras should attain to shoot images for the GCA Collection. Cameras reaching these standards produce images that are best suited for a wide variety of archival applications including publications and exhibitions. High quality images capture more digital data and therefore produce the best 'product' for long-term preservation. Imagine having to open up one of these digital images *decades* from now, not just next year.

The *Policy's* stickiest issue seems to involve the camera's sensor size. The graphic on the left illustrates sensor sizes relative to a standard 35mm film frame (circled in black) which, until recently, was the standard for GCA Collection submissions. AAG's *Policy* requests digital cameras with a sensor size of 2.5cm or higher (circled in green).

Sensor sizes in most current digital cameras relative to a standard 35mm frame.

Most point-and-shoot digital cameras have a relatively tiny sensor (circled in red) that cram a lot of digital data into a small space. This can lead to problems when it comes [time](#) to enlarge the digital image for something like an [exhibit](#) or a publication or to refresh the digital file for [long-term](#) preservation purposes.

Any camera's sensor size* can be checked on the Digital Photography Review's website at www.dpreview.com/products. Don't hesitate to contact AAG staff if you need help with **determining** your camera's sensor size or have any other **questions**. Capturing the best possible garden images today **will** be invaluable for garden researchers a century from now!

* For dimensional formulas, multiply the two numbers and move the decimal point **two** places to the left to figure out the cm size.
Example: 20.7mm x 13.8mm = 285mm² = 2.85cm². AAG approved!



Sandcastle Farm in Hancock, NH, August 2009. Eleanor Briggs, photographer.

Digital image from the Garden Club of America Collection at the Archives of American Gardens
By Joyce Connolly, Museum Specialist, AAG, May 2011.

 **Smithsonian Institution**

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

The Archives of American Gardens' *Digital Submission Policy* spells out the technical specifications for digital submissions to the Garden Club of America Collection. These specs help ensure that AAG collects high quality digital images which are best suited for a wide variety of archival applications like research, publications and exhibitions. High quality digital images capture more digital data and therefore produce the best 'product' for long term preservation. Think a century from now, not next month!

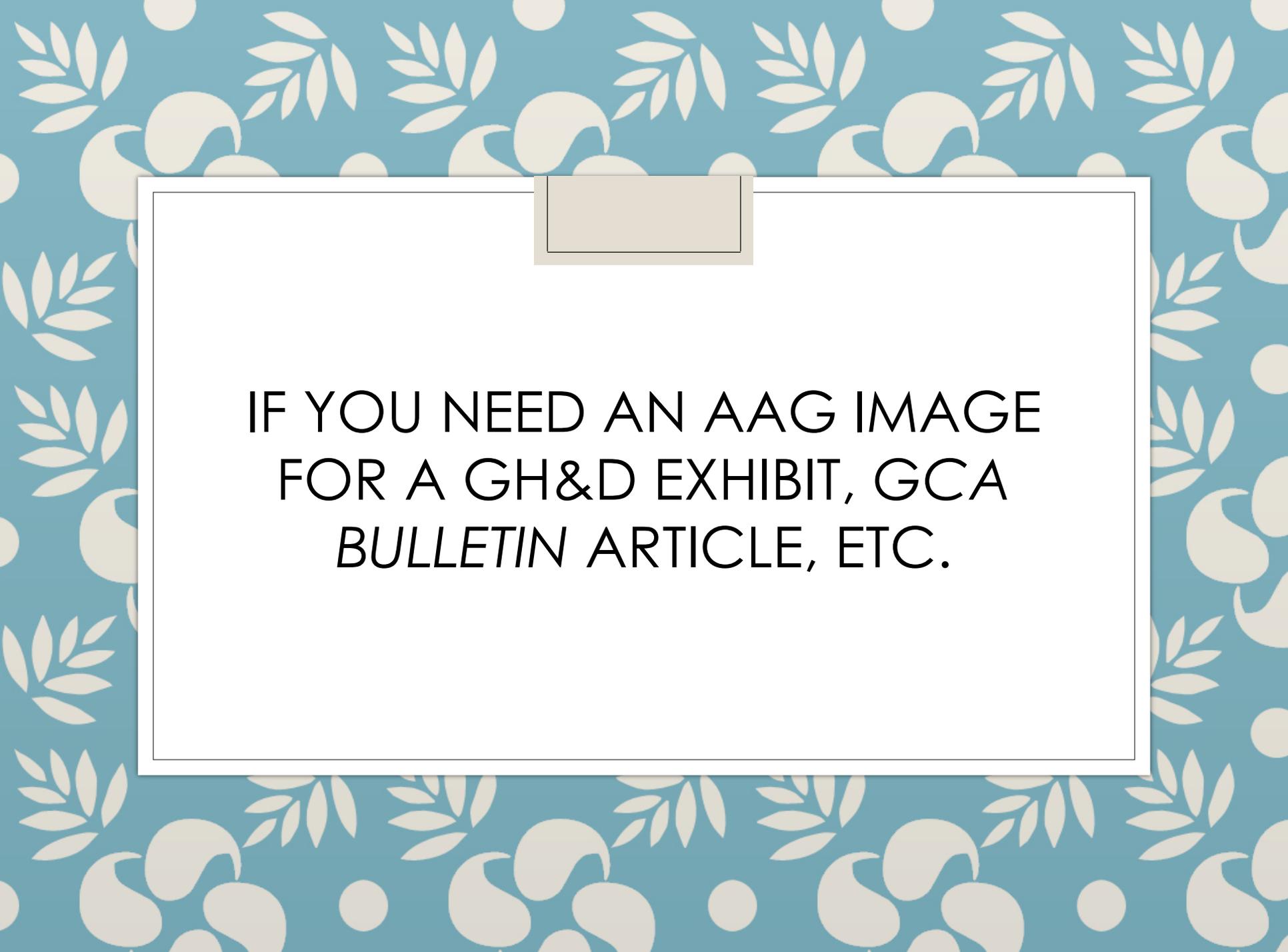
AAG's Eight Digital Commandments

Please be sure to consult the *Digital Submission Policy* when you are putting together a digital submission for AAG. Here are some of the highlights:

<p>I. No point and shoot cameras. You must use a DSLR!</p>  	<p>II. The digital file should measure at least 2,100 pixels on the image's long side (3,000 pixels or above is preferred).</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Pixel width = 3872 Pixel height = 2592</p>
<p>III. If you are shooting JPEGs, set your camera to shoot in the highest JPEG setting. If you are shooting images as raw files, please process them as TIFFs.</p>	<p>IV. No 'Photoshopping' please. AAG documents actual gardens, not made-up ones!</p>
<p>V. The image file name should include the date the image was taken.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> 001_Jones Garden_2012May15 002_Jones Garden_2012May15 003_Jones Garden_2013June22</p>	<p>VI. Digital image numbers <i>must</i> match image caption numbers and Image View Plan numbers Digital file #001 = Image caption # 1 = Image View Plan entry # 1</p> <p>It is easy to renumber digital files if you have made a mistake. If it hasn't already been burnt to a disk, simply click on the file name and renumber it.</p>
<p>Do not type <i>.jpeg</i> or <i>.tiff</i> at the end of the file name when you name the file. Your computer will automatically do this for you.</p>	<p>VII. Do not write on the CD; label the CD case or envelope instead.</p>
 	<p>VIII. Scan any original photographs at a minimum of 300 dpi/ppi (600 dpi/ppi is preferred). TIFF is preferred, if that is an option.</p> 

A bonus commandment for ALL submissions: don't forget an accurate, descriptive caption for each image!

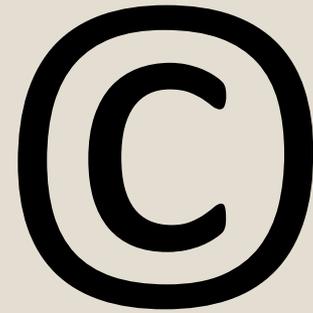
By Joyce Connolly, Museum Specialist, Archives of American Gardens, January 2014



IF YOU NEED AN AAG IMAGE
FOR A GH&D EXHIBIT, GCA
BULLETIN ARTICLE, ETC.

Using images from AAG

- Images are available for non-commercial educational purposes
 - They can be saved directly from SIRIS
- Contact AAG if you need to order high resolution images for publications or exhibitions
 - Give AAG at least 3-4 weeks lead time for any duplication requests
- Please notify AAG of any images you use for exhibits, lectures, newsletters, etc.



www.SIRIS.si.edu

- Smithsonian's online catalog
 - contains a *sampling* of images from gardens documented in the GCA Collection
- Two major search options
 - SIRIS
 - the preferred access point for saving images
 - Collections Search Center
 - CRC 'truncates' saved images

Smithsonian Institution
Research Information System

SIRIS

Features

[The Story of the "Labat: A Creole Legacy" Quilt](#) 14 Jun 2016
Chance meetings can result in amazing things. In 2000, Artist Lori K. Gordon and 102-year-old Celestine Labat met at a...

[Where Burpee Seeds Grow](#) 17 May 2016
As my time as an intern at the Archives of American Gardens comes to an end, I reflect on how...

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600,000 records of the Inventory of American Painting & Sculpture, Photograph Archives and Pre-1977 Art Exhibition Catalogue Index.
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10,000 records including bibliographic & legal citations, important events, images, and biographical information on the Board of Regents.
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40,000 aircraft and manufacturer records comprise this authority listing-- an online expansion of The Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum *Directory of Airplanes: Their Designers and Manufacturers*.
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Image Gallery Browse

Collections Search Center
Search over 9.2 million records, with 1,346,300 images, video and sound files from Smithsonian museums, archives, and libraries.
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SIRIS catalog records

- Note alpha-numeric 'local' or 'call' number for reference purposes
 - (e.g. CA375026)

The screenshot shows a search result for 'Thompson Garden'. The record includes a title, description, production date, and various subject and geographical tags. A table at the bottom of the record, titled 'Item Information', lists the repository and the call number.

Item Information	
Repository	Call No.
Archives of American Gardens	CA375026

Call No.
CA375026



DEMO: SAVING AN IMAGE FROM SIRIS