

Garden Week returns

Local event, after a year away due to pandemic, features four homes

GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Thursday, April 15, 2021

Section C



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

One hundred years ago, Cherokee was an icehouse. The next year, its owners transformed the structure into a home, which has continued to grow and welcome visitors for nearly a century ... page 4C.



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

Toddsbury ... page 7C.



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

Palace Green ... page 14C.



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

Weston Hall ... page 18C.

**The owners
are artists:**



Scarlet Begonias, left, by Gayle Merrill at Cherokee, page 6C.

Artwork by Cindy Barnett at Weston Hall, right, page 21C.



The ladies in charge welcome visitors to Garden Week



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

Historic Ware Episcopal Church in Gloucester is headquarters for the local Garden Tour on Saturday.

Greeting visitors at Ware; tour chairs listed

Head hostess Jane Smith and ticket chair Margaret Singleton will be at headquarters Ware Episcopal Church, assisted by Mary Helen Birdsall, Sarah Finney and Cara Randolph.

This year's Tour Chair is Lynne Bohon Manning, backed up by co-chair Pam Driggs and Garden Club of Gloucester president Julie Stone and all the other members of this venerable organization.

Co-heads of flowers are Becky Meeker and Leslie Belvin; advertising, Lynne Manning; head writer, Letitia Grant; head of hostesses, Marianne Bowles; local brochure, Suzanne Scott; photography, Sandy Geiger; social media, Betsy Poulsen; publicity, Durfee Betts; sponsorships, Sue Hewitt, Bambi Thompson and Pam Driggs; refreshments, Rene Wenleder; and transportation co-chairs, Beth Gibson and Cynthia Geisert.

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BY LYNNE BOHON MANNING
GARDEN WEEK CHAIRMAN AND
PAM DRIGGS, GARDEN WEEK CO-CHAIR

The Garden Club of Gloucester is happy to announce our

87th Historic Garden Week tour which will be held on Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Due to COVID, we have had to "re-imagine" most pro-

ocols for touring our four beautiful homes with lovely gardens: Toddsbury and Cherokee in Gloucester, and Palace

SEE FROM THE CHAIRMEN, PAGE 3C

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FROM THE CHAIRMEN: *Welcome to Garden Week*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2C)

Green and Weston Hall in Mathews. But Garden Week has returned after the pandemic forced its cancellation in 2020.

Headquarters is located at the historic Ware Episcopal Church. Tickets will be capped at 160 tickets for the morning tour and 160 tickets for the afternoon tour, and they have already sold out. Tickets will not be available at headquarters.

Peaceful, historic, coastal!

Home to magnificent historic homes, shorelines and water views, the Gloucester-Mathews tour is offering four distinctive properties, one from each century since the nation's founding.

The oldest property, Toddsbury is one of the earliest domestic structures in the United States. As a recipient of one of the first historic preservation easements in Virginia, the property is an outstanding example of an early Tidewater planter's home and has been continually inhabited since 1652.

The second home, Cherokee, began life as a typical 1700s icehouse. Later, it was

converted into a simple retirement dwelling which has been lovingly expanded and improved with each owner and is now the home of an artist.

Palace Green, a beautiful example of late Federal style, is from the 1830s and sits well back from Main Street in Mathews behind a sweeping lawn dappled by the shade of mature trees.

Weston Hall, built to resemble the layout of a ship in the early 1900s, is a light-filled artist's home and includes a lovely large terrace area for entertaining where guests can enjoy both garden and water views.

Details about the tour

Ware Episcopal Church, 7825 John Clayton Memorial Highway, Gloucester, serves as headquarters for anyone planning to attend the tour, with maps available on tour day.

Parking: Free parking available at headquarters and on-site at all four homes: Toddsbury, Cherokee, Weston Hall and Palace Green. No shuttles.

In addition to the homes, Gloucester Extension Master Gardeners will be available for guided tours of Brent &

Becky's Bulbs Chesapeake Bay-friendly gardens from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Brent & Becky's is located at 7900 Daffodil Lane, Gloucester.

The headquarters

Ware Parish Church is a historic Episcopal church located near Gloucester Court House. Founded in 1652, it is one of the oldest surviving parish churches in the commonwealth. Why the name Ware Parish? There's no clear answer other than that the Ware River is nearby. The parish was formed after the execution of Charles I in England and before Charles II was crowned king. During this period the offices of the Bishop of London and the Book of Common Prayer were abolished. Yet the colony in Virginia remained loyal to the monarchy. In the parish's earliest days, they worshiped on Ware Neck near Glen Roy Plantation. Tradition and research by the Rev. William Byrd Lee, 12th rector of Ware, indicated that the church was completed circa 1690.

Our backers

As tour chairs, we would like to particularly thank our local advertisers and sponsors without whom the tour would not exist.

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monwealth Water Treatment, Dr. Lombard, DDS, GibsonSingleton Personal Injury Lawyers, Gloucester Arts Festival, Gloucester-Mathews Gazette-Journal, Gloucester Parks and Recreation, Gunn's Body Shop, Inc., Haley Real Estate; Also, Inn at Warner Hall, Lynne Bohon Manning, Main Street Preservation Trust for

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SEE WELCOME, PAGE 4C

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SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

Cherokee, once an icehouse, overlooks the North River.

Spacious Cherokee grew from an icehouse

The spacious North River home Cherokee started life as an icehouse, built in the 18th century.

It was typical of the icehouses of that century. In form, it was circular. In construction, it was of brick, with walls 8 inches thick. The icehouse was two stories, with dirt piled halfway up its walls to provide insulation for the ice kept inside.

In 1922, William Fleet Taliaferro and his wife Elizabeth Stewart Taliaferro lived next door at The Exchange and the icehouse was part of the property. With a great deal of work, they converted the icehouse into a lovely retirement dwelling. They added a front door on the river side, grand

windows, and an addition to include bathroom, kitchen and dining room. Cherokee is now home to Gayle and Hunter Merrill.

Elizabeth Taliaferro, an artist and a founder of the Gloucester Library, described the conversion for an article in the Gazette-Journal when the house was opened for Garden Week in 1956:

"As we sat on the porch at The Exchange, my husband, pipe in hand, tilted back in his chair and said, 'Do you know what I think? I'm tired of running firewood to keep all these fireplaces going ... I should like to make a home in the icehouse!'

"We looked across the lawn. There, at the farthest end,

was the picturesque old icehouse. Earth was mounded about it to some height; playful little lambs were frolicking and running up and down its grassy slopes. In former days, huge quantities of ice had been stored in it, and the owners of The Exchange and their neighbors had kept large

SEE **CHEROKEE**, PAGE 5C

WELCOME

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3C)

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The purpose

Historic Garden Week funds the Garden Club of Virginia's restoration and preservation of public gardens and landscapes throughout Virginia as well as a research fellowship

program for graduate students in landscape architecture. As a gift to the commonwealth and in celebration of the Garden Club of Virginia's centennial, this year's proceeds will also support projects at Virginia State Parks.

We hope you will put April 17 on your calendar to come and enjoy yet another beautiful Historic Garden Week House & Garden Tour.



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CHEROKEE: *Spacious North River home began life as an icehouse*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4C)



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

Welcome to Cherokee.

quantities of meat in its depths. "But you would freeze," I said. "Not at all. I should build a huge fireplace—a big chimney—and we could cook all our meals in the fireplace very easily." Eventually, however, he consented to have a small addition built to the main round structure. A builder was engaged—Mr. Robins of Ware Neck. My husband explained to Mr. Robins and together they worked it out. Sometimes the problems involved appeared very difficult and both men spent many a sleepless night trying to work out the answers.

"There was the staircase, for instance. My husband knew what he wanted, but how to explain to anyone else? The answer finally came out—but how to finish the last steps and post? We found the correct design on a Christmas card. The house, being round, the staircase, fireplace, bookcase, etc., must be on a curve. We found the fireplace and the mantel we wanted on another Christmas card ... It was of utmost importance that the fireplace should 'draw.' So my husband engaged a man who was an expert on chimneys. He brought his own assistants, all deacons in their church, so the fireplace was blessed; it always drew."

The "round room" on the first floor became the living room, and the house was named Cherokee for the roses that grew there.

Since then, it has grown in every direction, with the icehouse tower still the dominant aspect of its roofline.

SEE **CHEROKEE**, PAGE 6C

An ancient photo shows Cherokee when it was the icehouse for Exchange.



FILE PHOTO

A view of Cherokee in 1956, a year when the home was also open for Garden Week. It has grown considerably in the intervening 65 years.

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CHEROKEE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5C)

Cherokee is a gracious home with magnificent views of the North River. The circular first-floor room is the dining room, with a perfectly round table in the center. An earlier expansion of the house created an intimate interior courtyard garden which has since become a light-filled space for Gayle Merrill's art studio. Visitors will enjoy seeing her vibrant floral paintings, as well as collections of art, hand-blown glass bottles, decoys, and steins. Other notable features include a grandfather clock from the 1700s and a vintage slot machine.

With its history as a humble icehouse, Cherokee is a singular experience.

Directions from Ware Episcopal Church (headquarters): From the church parking lot, turn right onto Route 14, turn right onto Exchange Drive. Go straight 1.4 miles

The volunteers

At Cherokee, the head

hostesses are Peggy Montgomery and Suzanne Scott. Flower arrangements will be led by Eleanor Gardner and Tina McManus.

Hostesses will be Roxana Andersen, Brenda Ashe, Nancy Dransfield, Tabb Farinholt, Eleanor Gardner, Jenny George, Kacki Haggerty, Susan Haley, Jeannie Hockaday, Carol Lawrence, Valerie Lewis, Elizabeth McCormick, Tina McManus, Nancy Messbarger, Marilyn Muron, Sue Perrin, Beth Richardson, Patty Shaw, Darlene Talbott, Bambi Thompson and Kim Williams.

Flower arrangers will be Sarah Finney, Susan Haley, Nancy Messbarger, Cara Randolph, Beth Richardson, Julie Stone, Darlene Talbott and Bambi Thompson.

Parkers will be Alex Celia, Joe Celia, Butch Edmonds, John Montgomery, Everett Outland, Ken Richardson, Jeff Watkins and Byron Williams.



ELSA VERBYLA / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Artist-homeowner Gayle Merrill, holding "Cuddy," stands in her studio at Cherokee. Merrill's works can be seen in the Art Speaks Gallery at the Bay School, Mathews.

Lady of the house at Cherokee has a lifetime love of art

The lady of the house at Cherokee, Gayle Merrill, is an artist who developed a love for art from as far back as she can remember.

"Instead of being social in school, I would just go to my room and draw and paint,"

she said. "My mother used to complain that I needed to go outside and make friends."

Born in Washington, D.C., she grew up in Alabama and Northern Virginia, and earned a bachelor's degree in fine art with a minor in

education at Virginia Tech. This training led to teaching art and art history at the high school level for 10 years in Chesapeake. All the time, Merrill was also painting,

SEE A LOVE OF ART, PAGE 7C

WELCOME TO THE GARDEN WEEK

"Blue Heron Cove"



Beautiful Home sitting on 9.81 acres fronting Stutts Creek. This home features 4BR with 2 masters and 5BA. There are 2 fireplaces, built-in bookshelves, dining room, family room and Florida room. The upgraded kitchen features a breakfast/bar area and hardwood flooring throughout. 3-car garage. Enjoy water views from almost every room. The guesthouse features 1BR, 1BA, living room and kitchen. Home includes generator, garden and pasture areas, new gazebo and hot tub. The dock is equipped with water and electric. Don't miss this one! **\$924,900**

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This home is a breath of fresh air. The home was remodeled to include an addition with guesthouse in 2015. Home features open floor plan, vaulted ceilings and skylight, 3BR, 2.5BA, Master Suite includes brand new state-of-the-art bath and walk-in closet. Don't miss the Lanai includes hot tub spa! and sits on 1.95 acres fronting Put-In Creek, near the mouth of the East River with breathtaking water views. Pier is equipped with electric, water and fish cleaning station. There is also a floating dock and 10,000 lb boatlift. Features include a newer outdoor shower, generator hookup, camera system and is Wi-Fi ready! New roof and well. This stunning home is great for family gatherings! **\$745,000**

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A LOVE OF ART

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6C)

mostly in watercolors, and exhibiting.

Marriage, two sons and moving around, finally residing at Smith Mountain Lake, Merrill began painting with oils and said she "started painting with oils and loved the smooth thick texture of the paint and the vibrant colors" and finding this medium "a completely different experience than with water and paint. With a studio at the lake and also a studio at our summer home in Gloucester, I spent most of my time painting water scenes with boats."

The family left the lake and moved full-time to Gloucester, where the garden has become a favorite interest and where she finds inspiration in light and color.

"I hope all of my paintings express happiness, the feeling I have when I'm outside. Currently, in my garden series, I want to achieve a rhythmical play with colors and shapes interacting with each other to create a colorful garden composition, combining loose painterly strokes with a sense of realism," Merrill said.

Toddsbury embraces all eras of local history

Toddsbury is an ancient 17th-century family home, acknowledged as the "Mother House" of the North River. Of the original land grant, made to English sea captain Thomas Todd in 1652, 100 acres remain. Built of brick, facing the river, the original house dates from 1658. Additions in 1690, 1720, 1782 and 1948 complete the L-shaped gambrel-roofed structure seen today.

An outstanding and substantial example of an early Tidewater domestic structure, Toddsbury is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Virginia Historic Landmark. The interiors boast extremely fine early 18th-century paneling, unique carved "keystones" over the

windows, and brick linenfold jack arches above the earliest entrances. The garden wall dates from the 1690s and contains an acre square.

The nearly mile-long riverfront with its enormous willow oaks overlooks the lon-

gest southern exposure on the North River. The half-mile tree-lined approach to the house leads to the orchard, walled garden, carriage house, guest house, horse paddocks,

SEE TODDSBURY, PAGE 8C

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TODDSBURY: North River home embraces all eras of local history

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7C)

barn and wharf.

Archaeology on the east lawn, and specimens of a rare "Gloucester hickory" tree exchanged with Jefferson for planting at Monticello, enhance the grounds. The visitor is richly rewarded in touring this finely preserved home, known as "The Jewel of Tidewater."

Directions from Ware Episcopal Church (headquarters): From the church parking lot, turn right onto Route

14. Go 2.3 miles, turn right onto Toddsbury Lane. Go straight one mile to parking attendants.

The volunteers Head hostesses at Toddsbury are Jane Worthington

SEE TODDSBURY, PAGE 10C



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

The dining room at Toddsbury. Fine paneling from centuries ago accents the old home.



FILE PHOTO

A photograph of Toddsbury dated Tuesday, May 22, 1932, with the inscription: "Toddsbury, on North River, Gloucester County, Virginia. The home of Mr. and Mrs. William S. Mott."

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SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

Toddsbury looks out over the North River, with a front-row seat to persons working and playing on the water.



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

The grounds at Toddsbury are spacious and inviting for all ages. Interesting details are found in every corner.



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TODDSBURY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8C)

SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER
A deep window at Toddsbury.

and Durfee Betts. Flower arrangements will be led by Kate Cole and Kathleen O'Neal.

Hostesses will be Leonne Arsenovic, Anne Aycok, Marianne Bowles, Molly Broderon, Terri Byrne, Pat Carlton, Martin Coffee, David Drawbaugh, Letitia Grant, Susan Howard, Suzanne Hudson, Lauryn Haynie, Dianne Lucy, Anne Marshall, Miranda McClintic, Karen McNeil, Jeannie Miller, Mollie Montague, Allison Parker, Annie Rex, Vivian Shackelford, Jay Smith, Mollie Stewart, Lou Taylor, Mimi Ulsaker, Nina Watkins, Alice West, Gloria Williams and Helen Worthington.

Flower arrangers will be Marianne Bowles, Deborah Brooks, Margaret Cahoon, Martin Coffee, Penny Doyel, Letitia Grant, Susan Howard, Suzanne Hudson, Miranda McClintic, Linda Pinkham, Hilary Propst, Sue Radler, Theresa Redd, Annie Rex, Jane Smith, Melinda Smith and Nina Watkins. Parkers will be Todd Geisert, Will Grant, David Hudson, Jon Lucy, Davis Marshall, Bill Perrin, Kent Taylor and Tim Ulsaker.

The Jefferson Hickory

Family legend at Toddsbury said that this old hickory was known to Thomas Jefferson, who referred in garden writings to the "Gloucester hickory" and requested nuts from it, planting them at Monticello. This photo was taken in May 2003 and shows Carter Williams, left, who grew up under its shade; her granddaughter Molly Montague, and Molly's parents, Mary and Breck Montague. The tree fell several months later in Hurricane Isabel; its descendants live on at Toddsbury.

FILE PHOTO



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Garden Week proceeds help to beautify Virginia

Garden Week is a familiar term in Gloucester and Mathews, an annual rite of spring that finds homes in the counties opened to visitors and beautifully decorated

with arrangements by members of the Garden Club of Gloucester, the local sponsor.

Statewide, Garden Week is a project of the Garden Club of Virginia, of which the Gloucester club is an affiliate. The state club recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. It had to cancel Garden Week in 2020 at the outset of the COVID-19, and has brought back the venerable tour, which dates from 1929, with precautions of limited crowd size, masks and distancing.

Tricia Garner, chairman of the statewide event, said the 2020 cancellation brought uncertainty about the path forward; however, she said, "we've been so touched and impressed with the amazing support of our sponsors, advertisers, volunteers and homeowners, all of whom are critical to making this spring-time tradition a reality."

"As soon as it became apparent we needed to cancel, we started planning how to make the 2021 tours a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone involved," Garner added.

Historic Garden Week 2021, which begins Saturday and includes the tour in Gloucester and Mathews, will include 30 unique tours organized and hosted by 48 member clubs located from the foothills of the Shenandoah Valley to the beaches of Tidewater. Throughout Central Virginia and almost to North Carolina, the full range of Virginia's landscape is showcased through the tours hosted by member clubs, a GCV release said.

"In commemoration of the GCV Centennial, we updated our first economic impact study of the nation's only statewide house and garden tour," says Lynn McCashin, GCV Executive Director. "While we couldn't go all the way back to the first tours in 1929, we have reliable data indicating that the cumulative impact over the last 50 years is an impressive \$518 million. It's the largest ongoing volunteer effort in Virginia that promotes so many of our communities, both large and small. We felt that an economic impact study would help validate that work."



THE GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA

In addition to the local impact, the tour has preserved and beautified natural spaces throughout Virginia.

The GCV release said that "The inspiration for Historic Garden Week dates to 1927 when a flower show organized by Garden Club of Virginia volunteers raised \$7,000 to save trees at Monticello. The first tours took place two years later."

Proceeds from tours have continued to fund the restora-

tion and preservation of the commonwealth's significant historic public gardens ever since. "Tour proceeds continue to keep Virginia beautiful," said Betsy Worthington, Chairman of the Restoration Committee, which oversees the selection and management of GCV's restoration and preservation projects.

The state club has made a \$500,000 centennial commitment to Virginia state parks.



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Fairfield Foundation welcomes visitors at three sites during tour

The Fairfield Foundation and the Gloucester Preservation Foundation will open Dr. Walter Reed's Birthplace to the public on Saturday during Historic Garden Week in Virginia. In 1926, the Medical Society of Virginia saved the tiny house, and the structure

has since become a well-known Gloucester icon located at the corner of Belroi and Hickory Fork roads. "The birthplace represents one of the first preservation efforts in Gloucester County," said David Brown, Co-director of the Fairfield Foundation

and Chairman of the Board of the Gloucester Preservation Foundation. "It was once tucked behind commercial buildings fronting on Hickory Fork Road in the community of Belroi."

SEE **ARCHAEOLOGY**, PAGE 13C



Volunteers and staff after a socially-distanced day tidying up Walter Reed's Birthplace. Shown from left are Tom Karow, Ryan Brauckmann and Chandler Fitzsimon.



FAIRFIELD FOUNDATION PHOTO

Fairfield Foundation staff archaeologist Katie Brauckmann adjusts settings on a transit used to lay out and record units for excavation at Palace Green.



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ARCHAEOLOGY: *The search for the past will be on display at three sites*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12C)

In 1851, after a fire at the Bellamy Church parsonage, the small building was offered to the congregation's new preacher, Lemuel Reed, and his family, which included five children and a wife who was expecting another child soon. On September 13, 1851, the Reeds welcomed their sixth child, Walter. Their son would go on to serve as a U.S. Army physician. He is best remembered for leading a team in the use of precise scientific methods to confirm the theory that yellow fever is transmitted by a particular mosquito species.

"The house is typical of a dwelling type prevalent in rural Gloucester and throughout Virginia's Tidewater and Piedmont regions at the time," added Thane Harpole, Co-director of the Fairfield Foundation. Tree ring dating of original structural timbers indicates the house was built in 1821 or shortly thereafter. There was one room on the first floor and another on the second. When interviewed later in life, Walter Reed's brother said that the family was cozy and comfortable there. "Development and the changing needs of society since the mid-20th century have made the survival of this once-common type of house rare," Brown concluded.

Visit Dr. Walter Reed's Birthplace between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to tour the house and see the Middle Peninsula Amateur Radio Club, whose members will be on the grounds under tents displaying equipment and talking about their activities.

The Fairfield Foundation's archaeologists will also be on site at Toddsbury in Gloucester and Palace Green in Mathews on April 17, while the homes are open for Garden Week tours. See related stories.

Brown said, "No less than five outbuildings from the colonial period were located immediately east of the main house. Over the last several years excavations have uncovered significant evidence of these buildings' functions and construction."

The foundation's current work continues that research, including examination of the likely kitchen, Brown said.

Visitors to Palace Green will be able to watch Fairfield Foundation archaeologists at

SEE **ARCHAEOLOGY**, PAGE 14C



A 2019 drone's eye view of archaeological excavations around historic outbuildings at Toddsbury.

FAIRFIELD FOUNDATION PHOTO



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Links to history found at Palace Green

Palace Green sits well back from Main Street in Mathews behind a sweeping lawn dappled by the shade of mature trees. The exact age of this stately home is unclear but the lunette window high under the roof peak matches several others elsewhere in Mathews which can be reliably dated c. 1835.

The current owners, Paul and Elsa Verbyla, are part of the Cooke family which entered the long history of the house around 1918 when Giles Buckner Cooke purchased the home. He had been a Confederate Army officer, educator and Episcopal

SEE PALACE GREEN, PAGE 15C



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER
Looking into the front hall at Palace Green.

ARCHAEOLOGY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13C)

work as they search for evidence of the dwellings of enslaved persons.
In 1860, when the home was occupied by owner Francis Armistead, his wife Sarah, and eight children, the property also provided a home for 14 enslaved persons, ranging in age from six months to 75 years, according to the 1860 Census and the 1860 slave schedule.
Brown of the Fairfield Foundation said a previous archaeological survey un-

covered evidence of these occupants around the standing house as well as in the yard closer to the road. "Our excavations will focus on an area along the current driveway that may have included slave quarters in the early-to-mid-19th century. We are hoping to find evidence of the lives of enslaved Africans at Palace Green during that time, and share those discoveries with the community," Brown said.



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FILE PHOTO

Palace Green as it appeared around 1910. Except for the addition of a porch on the left side, the exterior is little changed.

PALACE GREEN

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14C)

minister. By 1920, he was the last living member of Robert E. Lee's wartime staff.

His son, John Warren Cooke, was born in 1915 and grew up to be a politician and newspaper publisher. John Warren Cooke's daughter and her husband are the current owners, representing the third generation of the Cooke family to live here.

In the room to the left of the entry hall visitors can see Giles Cooke's writing desk as well as a portrait of him by Ellis Silvette, and one of John Warren Cooke by Ellis's son David Silvette.

Palace Green has an extensive collection of family antiques and a captivating art collection.

The waterfront guest cottage will also be open.

Directions from Ware Episcopal Church (headquarters): From the church parking lot, turn right onto Route 14. Go 11.8 miles to Church Street (Route 611). Turn right onto Church Street, follow for 2.3 miles to stop sign. Turn onto Main Street. Go 0.5 mile to Palace Green on your right.

Volunteers

Head hostesses are Lynn Hornsby and Kathy Klein. Flower arrangements will be led by Emily Barbee and Kate Zullo.

Hostesses will be Karin Andrews, Terry Arnold, Chris Bridge, Libby Crawford, Betty Wrenn Day, Frances Ellis,

SEE PALACE GREEN, PAGE 16C

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Dining room and living room at Palace Green.

SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

PALACE GREEN

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15C)

Sherry Hamilton, D'Ann Kowitz, Reed Lawson, Becky Morgan, Sandy Nuttall, Janice Phillips, Carolyn Rowe, Mary Sampson, Gloria Savage, Lynda Smith, Erica Spadaccini, Josie Thorpe, Edith Turner and Sandy Warhol.

Flower arrangers will be Ceci Brown, Whit Brown, Gail Claydon, Betty Wrenn Day, Betsy Henderson, Lorraine Ingles, Joan Jackson and Peggy Robins.

Parkers will be Buzz Geiger, Jack Gibson, Ken Gibson, Chip Hornsby, Clayton James, Ginger James, David Meeker, Jonathan Peebles, Quinton Sheppard, John Singleton and Peter Worthington.



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FILE PHOTOS

A decade ago

Despite threatening weather, the 2011 Garden Week tour attracted some 600 visitors. At left, Mr. and Mrs. Todd Blanks of Hayes enjoy the gardens of Clovelly at Dutton. Below, Zoe Kindle of Richmond, hostess Jeannie Miller, and Zoe's daughter, Kae Kindle of Mathews, from left, stand on the back porch of Sweetgrass. At right, visitors to Gum Thicket on Gwynn's Island board a shuttle bus.



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Works of art can be found both inside and out
at Weston Hall ... see page 21C.



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Weston Hall enjoys magnificent views of the East River and beyond to the Mobjack Bay. Massive trees grace the sweeping lawn. There is a view across Mill Creek to nearby Poplar Grove and its original tide mill, the last one remaining in the Mobjack area.

Weston Hall was built by Captain Clarence Kirwan between 1900 and 1919. Legend has it that no construction was allowed to take place while the captain was at sea. Pine timber from the property was used for floors and doors.

The sturdy-looking Arts and Crafts-style exterior belies the light and airy feeling of the rooms within. Built to resemble the layout of a ship, the wide entry hall is 50 feet long and sweeps from the land side entrance to the water side.

Large light-filled rooms with high ceilings provide an open and sunny ambiance which serve as a backdrop for the art collection and the artfully chosen decor.

The home is owned by Cindy and Bill Barnett. Cindy is a painter and her artist's touch is apparent throughout the home and garden. The recently renovated guest house will also be open for tour.

Directions from Ware Episcopal Church (headquarters): From the church parking lot, turn right onto Route 14. Go 11.8 miles to Church Street. Follow for 2.3 miles to stop sign. Turn right onto Main

SEE WESTON HALL, PAGE 20C



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER

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PHOTO COURTESY MARY ANN GILMAN
Captain Clarence Kirwan, the builder of
Weston Hall.



SANDY GEIGER / GARDEN CLUB OF GLOUCESTER
A relic of earlier days at Weston Hall.



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The front-to-back, 50-foot center hallway of Weston Hall.



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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18C)

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Volunteers

Head hostesses at Weston Hall are Beth Tripp and Leslie Belvin. Flower arrangements will be led by Shannah

Cooper and Sue Hewitt.

Hostesses will be Merriweather Arnett, Margie Borden, Linda Bradford, Gay Butler, Clarice Campbell, Pat Davis, Jean Duggan, Ruth Fenstermacher, Sue Henshaw, Sue Hewitt, Dorothy Jeffress, Beth Johnson, Jen Kimball, Emily Leap, Emily Millner, Lisa Millner, Betsy Poulsen, Robin Ramsey and Jackie Zahn.

Flower arrangers will be

Leslie Belvin, Margie Borden, Linda Bradford, Betsy Poulsen, Robin Ramsey, Vivian Shackelford, Amelita Thomas, Beth Tripp and Rene Wenleder.

Parkers will be Roger Anderson, Rob Atkinson, Joseph Barragan, Keith Belvin, Leslie Bohon-Atkinson, Wynn Clark, Skip Driggs, Rob Fraser, Michael Joyce, Wendell Poulsen, Kirby Smith and Raymond Tripp.



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Weston Hall provides artist an escape from the hectic world

Weston Hall is home to Cindy and Bill Barnett, and painting pictures is the place that Cindy, a real estate agent with roots in art, escapes with her paintbrush.

She taught art for 11 years and

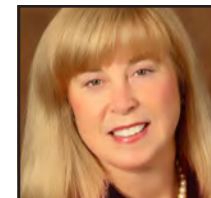
has a master's degree in art education. When the everyday to-do list adds stress, she turns to painting: "It's my outlet."

Barnett paints in oils and acrylics, and loves to use acrylics because if she is not satis-

fied with the work, she layers another painting on top of it. Her art style is also eclectic: she will paint almost anything that inspires her: "It's all different." Some is simple, some is complex.

It's not just the art: "My artwork is eclectic, my house is eclectic, my life is eclectic."

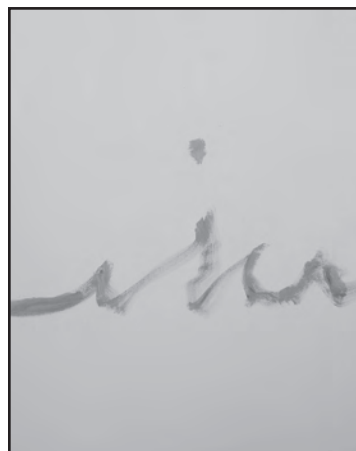
Visitors to Weston Hall will see a lot of her works on the walls.



Cindy Barnett



At left and below, several examples of Cindy Barnett's artwork.



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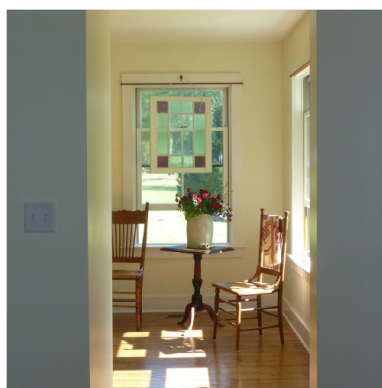


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Plein air artist to demonstrate work at Weston Hall

Celebrated plein air artist Dorothy Fagan of Mathews is scheduled to be demonstrating her art on the grounds of Weston Hall, one of four Garden Tour stops, on Saturday.

Her vibrant garden landscapes are large and bursting with color and represent "Joy's Garden," which she terms her "gift of healing art for America."

For example, in a painting called "Dream'd a Wish," Fagan said she prayed for peace with each stroke of her paintbrush.

Fagan said she began praying with color in private gar-

dens as her mother battled brain cancer three decades ago. She described her approach as imagining her canvas as a mirror, balancing emotional colors—warm and cool, light and dark, creating harmony in her own body of reflections—as she transforms "trauma and loss into healing art for a world in need."

She tells her method: "I draw imagery from memories, dreams, and snippets of day-to-day life—translating sparks of the Creator's Light into thick strokes of paint. Quietly I begin receiving deli-

cate veils of color, washing translucent glazes, etching and carving lines and textures with a palette knife ... until I feel a visceral kind of peace."

Fagan said she knew she would be an artist in the second grade, when the nuns encouraged her to copy a picture of the Virgin Mary on the chalkboard. As a young mother, she won recognition for her large pastels at Pastel Society of America, Pastel Society of Canada, Copley Society, and the National Arts Club in New York.

Fagan said that an assault

by knife threatened her life, she lost her ability to paint delicate abstract pastel landscapes. "Inexpressible emotions screamed in silence," and this, she said, catapulted her on "an incredible healing art journey by releasing emotions into strokes of pure pigment." Fagan said she discovered the flow of colors within could help her find the peace she so yearned for.

On an artist residency in France, Fagan said she found new direction for her artistry. Juxtaposing ancient man-made structures with her landscapes, she began exploring the relationship between human and divine in her paintings. Realigning her palette with the chakras, she

discovered color is an internal switch that lights creativity and healing.

Fagan studied painting and music as a child and completed her bachelor of fine arts degree in printmaking and painting at East Carolina University in 1975. She said that Robert Bowers Mayo of Gloucester, art historian, guided her to look inside herself for inspiration.

Her works are exhibited in MADS Gallery in Milan, Italy, and Musee de La Grande Vigne, Dinan, France, and in the states at the University of Massachusetts Memorial Research Center, Boston, City University of New York, and Longwood University Art Museum in Farmville.



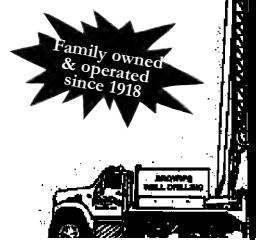
Dorothy Fagan with two of her large, colorful canvases.

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Garden Week visitors: Wait, wait, there's more!

While out enjoying the homes on tour this weekend, the following added features can be found to enhance your Garden Week experience.

Special activities

Gloucester Extension Master Gardeners will be available for guided tours of Brent & Becky's Bulbs Chesapeake Bay-friendly gardens from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Brent & Becky's is located at 7900 Daffodil Lane, Gloucester.

Arts on Main, 6580 Main Street, Gloucester, will exhibit, Bird's Eye Point of View by ceramicist Dianne Hottenstein from noon to 5 p.m.

Bay School Community Arts Center, 279 Main Street, Mathews, shows Contemporary Folk Art featuring regional artists from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Bartlett Tree Experts will have a seedling table at Cherokee. Free tree seedlings to 160 visitors between noon and 3 p.m.

Places of interest

Gloucester Historic Court Circle, 6509 Main Street, Gloucester. The brick-walled circle of historic county buildings is the oldest living village in Virginia. The 1766 Colonial Courthouse is the oldest courthouse still in use and the 1823 Debtor's Prison is one of only three remaining in the state.

Gloucester Museum of History, 6539 Main Street, Gloucester. The Boteourt Building, one of the largest pre-revolutionary brick ordinaries, houses exhibits on the history of Gloucester from the Native American era through the present. Call 804-693-1234.

Mathews Visitor Center, 239 Main Street, Mathews. Located in the 1898 Sibley's General Store, the building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Call 804-725-4229 or visit www.visitmathews.com for details.

Mathews Court Green, Court Street, Mathews. The Court Green is a national historic district and is where the Debtor's Jail, Sheriff's Office and County Administration Offices have been in operation since 1795 though the building uses have changed through the years.

Chesapeake Bay-Friendly Teaching Gardens at Brent & Becky's Bulbs, 7900 Daffodil Lane, Gloucester. This 8+ acre garden contains more than 20 themed "rooms." Call 804-693-3966 to find out more.

Nuttall Country Store, 6495 Ware Neck Road, Ware Neck. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Nuttall Store has served the Ware Neck community since 1875. Call 804-693-3067 or visit nuttallstore.com for details.

Zion Poplars Baptist Church, 7000 T.C. Walker Road, Gloucester. Built in the Gothic Revival style in 1886, it is one of the oldest independent African American congregations in Gloucester County.

Tompkins Cottage, Brickbat Road, Mathews. This c. 1815 cottage stands as one of the oldest wooden structures in the Court House. In 1837, it was purchased for use as a storehouse by Christopher Tompkins, father of Captain Sally Louisa Tompkins, C.S.A., the only female commissioned officer in the Confederate Army. Open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

New Point Comfort Lighthouse, at the southern tip of Mathews County, viewed from the end of Route 600, Old Lighthouse Road, built in 1805.

Walter Reed's Birthplace, 4021

Hickory Fork Road, Gloucester, at Belroi. Dr. Walter Reed, who discovered the cure for yellow fever, was born here and lived here as a child.

Rosewell Plantation Ruins, 5113 Old Rosewell Road, Gloucester. Built

in 1725 by Mann Page, Rosewell was the birthplace of Virginia Governor John Page and an architectural inspiration to Thomas Jefferson, a frequent visitor. Ravaged by fire in 1916, the ruins stand today as a fine exam-

ple of 18th-century craftsmanship. The Garden Club of Virginia granted a research fellowship in 2003 to consolidate landscape records of the grounds. Call 804-693-2585 or visit rosewell.org for more.

Edge Hill House, 6805 Main Street, Gloucester. The earliest part of Edge Hill was built from 1750 to 1770 and served as a family home and prominent general store among other endeavors.

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