

GARDENING IN THE LOWCOUNTRY

Some May Wait Generations For Garden--Others Prefer To Speed Process

By LEOLA ROBERTS

NOT MANY gardens used to be houses, but this one did. It started life as an old Charleston dwelling, but its next door neighbor, Mrs. Henry P. Staats of 59 Church St., saw it in another role. One day she bought it.

It wasn't that Mrs. Staats wanted a house. She didn't. Mr. and Mrs. Staats already had one of their own, the old Thomas Rose House, built in 1732. What they didn't have was enough room for a garden.

Thanks to the additional space, their garden now is extensive, and the remarkable thing about it is the absence of the appearance that new gardens are expected to have. Passersby assume that the garden is an old, well established one, and their assumption is natural because the trees are tall, the evergreens look as though they have been where they are for years, and it is impossible to discover the dividing line between the new and the old.

EVER SINCE Mr. and Mrs. Staats came to Charleston from Litchfield, Conn., in 1941 and bought the Rose house, they had wished for more planting space. Their lot had only a plot about 25 by 30 feet that could be used for the purpose. Mrs. Staats made this into a small formal garden whose beds and borders, edged with brick, made an attractive pattern. But there was no getting away from the fact that it was small — too small to satisfy the heart of a gardener.

Another square foot of ground was not to be had, not in that section of downtown Charleston where so many houses occupy their entire lots, boundary to boundary, leaving owners with no place to park their automobiles. The solution to the problem came last winter, when the property next door was put up for sale. Mr. and Mrs. Staats promptly bought it.

Mrs. Staats, with her husband's moral support — he doesn't garden, but he likes gardens — went to work immediately. She had the house on their new lot razed, keeping the old brick from it for future use. Her next step was to consult Loutrel Briggs, landscape designer, who worked out the plan for her project.

THE NEXT STEP was the spading. The top earth, three feet deep was removed and the finest top soil available went into its place. Cow compost, peat moss and a high grade of commercial fertilizer was mixed in. Mrs. Staats attributes the success of the garden to the thorough soil preparation.

The lot, 40 by 180 feet, was divided into three parts: a gravel parking area, a flower garden and what Mrs. Staats calls "my salad garden." Mr. F. J. Aichele, Charleston landscape consultant, worked with Mrs. Staats from this point to obtain the plants, shrubs and trees she wanted and give them proper care.

The salad garden occupies a space about 30 by 40 feet enclosed in a high cyclone wire fence. Old fashioned yellow and pink pillar roses grow against the fence. Several fig trees are being espaliered there, and a couple of persimmon trees are already established.

"My salad garden has a little

of everything we enjoy that we have reason to think we can cultivate successfully here," Mrs. Staats said. "We have several kinds of lettuce, two strawberry pyramids, artichokes, bird's eye peppers, parsley, tarragon, marjoram, basil and thyme."

EVERYTHING is flourishing, but the strawberries have done best of all. Planted last January, they bore a fine crop in May. The strawberry plants are set out in two circular beds of four layers each.

The bottom layer of the pyramid is a circle five feet in diameter; the next layer, four feet; the next, three feet, and the top layer, 15 inches. The layers, about six inches apart from each other, are enclosed in aluminum bands.

Mrs. Staats, a member of the Garden Club of Charleston, has 85 plants in each of her two pyramids. She has learned that the strawberries take very little care. The main work involved is in keeping the runners down in summer. The soil is good, well-drained loam.

When it came to planning her flower garden, Mrs. Staats had two main objectives, and she has never lost sight of them for a minute.

"I WANTED a scented garden and I was determined to have a garden that would be basically South Carolinian," she said. "There are so many South Carolina shrubs and flowers that can be counted on to do well here that I see no use planting a lot of others that, while beautiful, will bring so much disappointment if they can't adapt themselves to our climate."

The flower garden is laid out in rectangular shape, with an oval grass center. Shrubs and flowers are planted in borders on three sides of the area. The lawn, of centipede grass, has flourished from the day it was planted.

UNWILLING to wait for years for a finished look in the garden, Mrs. Staats ordered a number of large trees and set them out. The group, now scattered throughout the grounds, includes live oaks, pink- and white magnolias, one large holly and two smaller ones, plum, crabapple, dogwood and cherry laurels.

To give her garden fragrance Mrs. Staats has ginger, jasmine, tea olives and fragrant roses. She uses creeping gardenia as an edging plant for borders because it blooms profusely in summer — the blossom is a miniature gardenia — and provides glossy green foliage the rest of the year. The plant grows to a height of only about six inches.

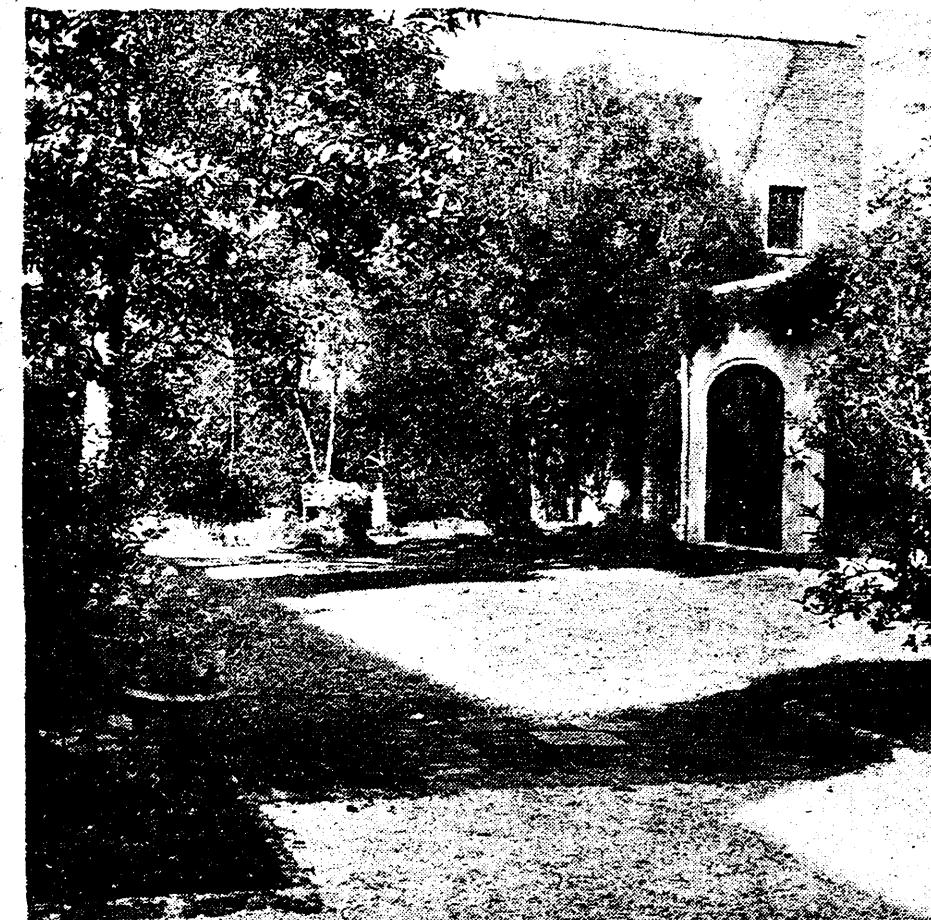
THE COLOR PLAN is cerise, blue and white for spring; yellow, and white for summer and fall. The spring color theme is achieved by cerise azaleas, white dogwood, camellias and early magnolias, and blue scillas and a ground cover of vinca. The summer colors of yellow and white are provided by lilies (all kinds, including many Hemerocallis), gordoniias and parkinsonias.

These plants form the mainstay of the garden, although there are others, less numerous, for variety. Mrs. Staats hasn't omitted bulbs like narcissi and Dutch Iris, but she hasn't planted many. She is more interested in some Asiatic species tulips and the newer varieties of Hemerocallis.

She is espaliering pyracantha against one of the walls of the house, and has set out wistaria and a few nandinas, too. The garden also has a sprinkling of geraniums in pots and ivy.



The garden of Mr. and Mrs. Henry P. Staats, 59 Church St., does not look its true age — less than a year — thanks to the many almost full-size trees that have been planted there. Live oaks, pink and white magnolias, holly, plum, crabapple, dogwood and cherry laurels spread their branches to give the garden the effect of mellowed years. Mrs. Staats has planned her garden especially for South Carolina shrubs and flowers and for fragrance. Fragrance is supplied by ginger, tea olives, roses and jasmine. Mrs. Staats is a member of the Garden Club of Charleston. (Evening Post Staff Photos by Jordan.)



The landscape design of Mr. and Mrs. Henry P. Staats' garden, 59 King Street, provides for three separate areas: a parkway for automobiles, bordered by a brick-paved terrace; a flower garden and a salad garden. In her salad garden, Mrs. Staats grows strawberries, lettuce, artichokes, chives, tarragon, marjoram, and a number of other herbs. The flower garden has camellias, scillas, masses of Hemerocallis, Asiatic species tulips and some chrysanthemums — only plants that have proven successful in Charleston's climate.

Clubs and Clubwomen

Groves Garden Club To Give Supper

The Groves Garden Club will hold a covered dish supper at the clubhouse on Shem Creek Tuesday at 8 p.m. for club members and all residents of The Groves, Mount Pleasant.

Plans for the supper were made at the November meeting this week at the home of Mrs. A. H. Barnett of Pineview Drive.

The Misses Katherine and Blanche Altman won the Groves Garden Club Yard-Of-The-Month award for November.

Ribbons for arrangement were presented to Mrs. A. L. Williams, Mrs. John T. Mundy, Mrs. Foeest Ball, Mrs. K. R. Kruger, Mrs. M. R. Moody Jr., and Mrs. J. R. Barnett.

Ribbons in horticulture were awarded to Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Mundy, Mrs. Kruger and Mrs. H. J. Hutchinson.

Judges were Mrs. Harold Tatum and Mrs. W. D. Carpenter of the Mount Pleasant Garden Club.

Mrs. Harry W. Jarrett was introduced as a new member.

Mrs. Walker W. Small and Mrs. Edwin H. Poulnot III were guests.

Wando Woods Club Hears Mrs. Madray

"Always elevate your flower beds," Mrs. G. R. Madray told members of the Wando Woods Garden Club at their meeting this week at Dorchester-Waylyn Community Center.

"Never let your beds be at house level," Mrs. Madray said. "This will give them a stiff appearance. Plant annuals in groups, triangles and V-shapes."

"Colors should be kept together. It is advisable to accent colors with whites and grays."

Mrs. Madray discussed the setting out of pansy, snapdragon and other annual plants this month. She warned against planting seeds this late.

The Wando Woods Club decided to hold a cake, cookie and pie sale Nov. 19 in Charleston Heights and on Dorchester Road.

The main club project for the year will be the Yard-Of-The-Month Award program to encourage improvement in the appearance of all gardens in the community.

Mrs. W. H. Cook of Maple Street, Wando Woods, was introduced as a new member.

Mrs. D. W. Aldous Jr. and Mrs. R. R. McClary were hostesses.

GSO Hostesses Plan Rally Monday, USO

MISS JANE HUDSON, assistant director of the Charleston USO, has called a pre-holiday rally of GSO and USO junior hostesses Monday at 8 p.m. in the conference room of the club to plan Thanksgiving and Christmas activities.

Miss Joan Brown, GSO president, will conduct the rally.

Miss Doris Brunson, GSO vice president will organize the special holiday decorating committee. Miss Joyce Es'Dorn, secretary, and Miss Patricia McMahon, treasurer, will assist Miss Hudson with plans for the rally.

Miss Joan Winter and Miss Joan Dodd have been appointed to direct a membership promotion for the USO Chorus which is to be organized Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the auditorium. Mr. Ron Spring of the USS Fidelity will serve as director.

Mr. Spring has had extensive experience in choral work in the schools and colleges in Ohio prior to his service with the Navy. The first "public" performance of the USO Chorus will be during the Christmas holidays.

USO PAL DAY is being observed during the month of November in many communities in the United States. The Charleston USO has set Nov. 16 for the program, which will be held in connection with the Wednesday dance at 8:30 p.m. An orchestra will play for dancing.

Hospitality hours for USO Pal Day have been set for Monday at 8 p.m. and Friday at 9 p.m. o'clock. Miss Hazel Parker, Miss Barbara Jean Griffin, and Mrs. James B. Law will be in charge. Mrs. Law will direct the music.

Post Scripts

CHARLESTON may well have plenty of traffic jams this weekend since it is The Citadel's Homecoming weekend, but the crowds of football fans won't all be on their way to this city. A number of Charlestonians are planning to attend out-of-town games.

The Notre Dame-North Carolina game at Chapel Hill, N.C., will attract Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Clarey, 32 Dunnemann Ave.; Mr. and Mrs. B. T. Ehrhardt, 26 Montagu St.; Mrs. Donald Davis, John's Island; Mr. and Mrs. Francis E. Condon, 532 Rutledge Ave.; Miss Mary Louise Moran, 53 Laurens St.; the Misses Mary and Catherine Kennedy of Broad St.

MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM L. SCHACHT, 151 Grove St., will go to Clemson to attend the Clemson-Maryland football game.

MR. AND MRS. S. GUY GREGG of Hickory, N.C., are expected to arrive today to visit Mr. Gregg's brother and sister-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. Charles R. Allen Jr. and Mrs. Berkley Grimball, tree; Mrs. Smythe and Mrs. W. H. Brockington, window.

Mrs. William H. Grimball Jr., Mrs. Louis Lawson and Mrs. Charlton deSaussure have been invited to join the Ivy Garden Club.

Ivy Garden Club To Assist With Tea

The Ivy Garden Club will assist the Garden Club of Charleston in decorating the Manigault House at Christmas and insponsoring the annual camellia show Jan. 28 and 29. The decision to take part in the two projects was made at the November meeting of the club Tuesday at the home of Mrs. Y. W. Scarborough Jr.

Mrs. Henry Smythe, vice president, announced the following members will help with decorations for the Manigault tea: Mrs. W. P. Cart Jr., Mrs. Laurence O'H. Stoney and Mrs. Watson C. Finner, staircase; Mrs. Y. W. Scarborough Jr., Mrs. Jules Deas, Mrs. Charles R. Allen Jr. and Mrs. Berkley Grimball, tree; Mrs. Smythe and Mrs. W. H. Brockington, window.

Mrs. William H. Grimball Jr., Mrs. Louis Lawson and Mrs. Charlton deSaussure have been invited to join the Ivy Garden Club.