

the year in review

2022-2023

ANNUAL REPORT



DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

It has been an extraordinary year for the Garden Club of Virginia, and as we reflect on this past fiscal year we can feel proud of what we have accomplished together. Your unwavering commitment and generous support have made our successes possible.

Allow me to share the highlights of our endeavors.

The 2022 Symposium, Grow Your Knowledge, inspired GCV members and garden lovers as we gathered in Richmond to enjoy and learn from speakers, including botanical arts wizard Francoise Weeks and internationally recognized landscape architect Thomas Woltz. We continued efforts to conserve our natural resources and promote education in fields of conservation and beautification through our 64th Conservation Forum, which elevated the statewide discussion on PFAS, known as "forever chemicals."

The restoration and preservation of historic landscapes have always been at the core of our mission. The resolute efforts and dedication of our members to host Historic Garden Week led to a most financially successful tour, which allows us to continue to work diligently on preserving the charming gardens and historic landmarks that are woven into the fabric of our state's heritage. As we continue to maintain these landscapes, we are ensuring that future generations can appreciate their beauty and learn from their rich history.

Through our educational workshops, programs, and Horticulture Field Day we continued to nurture a deep appreciation for our horticultural traditions.

None of these achievements would have been possible without your invaluable contributions and steadfast belief in our mission. Your support has not only strengthened our organization but has also brought us closer to realizing our vision of an environmentally sound Virginia, honoring the integrity of its significant historic landscapes, and informing and inspiring others to do the same.

Once again, I express my deepest gratitude for your dedication to the Garden Club of Virginia. I look forward to the year ahead as we embark on exciting new initiatives that will further enhance our worthy mission and create a brighter future that honors and celebrates the natural beauty of our commonwealth!

Warmly,

Debbie Lewis, GCV President, 2022-2024

GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA



DIGGING BENEATH THE SURFACE

While Debbie Lewis has shared highlights of the myriad activities of the Garden Club of Virginia last year, I'd like to shed a little light on a special activity that's been taking place in the shadows, or rather, in the basement of our headquarters, the Kent-Valentine House.

A team of volunteers has been cleaning out the basement and organizing the GCV's archival

materials. This is not glamorous work and is no small task. If you've ever had a basement where family members stored things in piles with no labels, imagine a basement that spans the footprint of a 15,000-square-foot historic mansion to which hundreds of members have had access over the years. It was quite a jumble, to say the least.

The basement has rooms for various activities: a laundry room to wash the linens used for special events; a flower room to hold a bevy of supplies, flower show materials and books; a "back room" to store Historic Garden Week signage and memorabilia as well as tables and chairs for events. At the heart of the basement is "The Vault," a small room that houses many of GCV's archival materials, including landscape architectural drawings, dating to the 1920s.

The members who signed up for this massive clean-up are an impressive group: former GCV presidents, committee chairmen, historians, and a museum curator. They appreciate the importance of the work of the Garden Club of Virginia and want to ensure its preservation for future generations. They have spent countless hours sorting, labeling and designating which materials to recycle, donate, discard, keep, or preserve.

Occasionally they ask me to take a look at the latest find: an original program from the first Historic Garden Week tour in 1929; correspondence with legislators over concerns about signage littering newly built highways and the destruction of native flora and fauna; and photos from dedication ceremonies of historic gardens restored by the GCV.

It's amazing to realize that the GCV has not wavered from its long-standing commitment to raising funds through a state-wide home and garden tour each year; that members get involved with conservation issues in their communities and at the state level; and that dozens of Virginia's most treasured historic public landscapes and gardens have been restored to their original splendor. We have modernized how we undertake these activities, but our purpose and pursuit remain the same.

Whether you are a new donor or a long-time supporter, thank you for helping the GCV to work behind the scenes, beneath the surface and in the sunlight to protect and preserve the gifts of nature and historic gardens in Virginia, and to educate and inspire future generations to build on this mission.

With gratitude,

Andrea Butler, Executive Director

GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA



YOUR WORK AND CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE ACHIEVING GCV'S MISSION POSSIBLE.

Thank you.

he restoration and preservation of Virginia's historic public gardens is an incredibly significant, and critically important, part of the work of GCV. When a property is accepted as a restoration site, that is the beginning of an ongoing relationship between the site and GCV. In many cases, the GCV has been working with partner sites for decades. Such is the case with Belmont. This very special property, the home of the late Impressionist artist Gari Melchers and his wife, Corinne, overlooks the Rappahannock River in Falmouth. In the 1920s Corinne, a member of the Garden Club of Virginia, used her artistic talents to improve upon

GCV's work at Belmont began in 1991, when we used photographs and garden journal records to

restore Corinne's garden. Since then, GCV has returned many times to enhance



an 1850s garden plan.

plantings, restore gates, and recreate the driveway according to the original 1921 plan. The "Long Walk" with rose arbors on either end is a signature restoration of Corinne's garden plan.

This year, GCV replaced the stone walkway and declining boxwood at Belmont's entrance with 'Little Missy' boxwood, a new cultivar which is blight resistant. This important work is made possible by our members' dedication and support during Historic

Garden Week each year. Proceeds from this event, due to the work of our members, go directly and entirely toward funding GCV's

historic restoration and preservation work.

The value of this program for maintaining these sites for future generations is truly priceless.





ducation is central to the mission of GCV, and our fellowship programs are a particular source of pride. The research that these programs have supported over many years has led to novel and impactful findings in the areas of conservation and the restoration or preservation of historic landscapes.

In fiscal year 2022-2023, conservation fellow Olivia Smith explored the long-term impacts of deer grazing to plant density and biodiversity in forested areas. She found that moderate to high levels of grazing in a forested area led to



lower density of plant life, and fewer types of plants, even after deer had been fenced out of the area for some time. Her work with GCV has inspired additional research—she will be working with William & Mary colleagues to test management practices such as manual seed introduction and canopy manipulation—that has the potential to inform management standards for improving biodiversity in forested areas populated with deer. We are excited to have had the opportunity to support Olivia's research, and look forward to sharing her findings as it progresses.

SHAPING OUR ENVIRONMENT

ach year, the Conservation Committee conducts the Conservation Forum. This event is open to the public and tackles topics that are top-of-mind in the world of conservation. The 2022 Conservation Forum shared important information on the proliferation and management of PFAS, known as "forever chemicals." Attendees left inspired to support and encourage action throughout Virginia and beyond.

Since the Forum, multiple bills have been sponsored at the state and federal levels seeking to curb the use of PFAS in products and manufacturing processes, and remediate these forever chemicals in our soil and drinking water. The issue of PFAS has been covered in news outlets throughout the commonwealth, and private corporations have been pressed to phase out the use of PFAS in their production processes.

Staying at the forefront of issues that protect and preserve our environment is central to the mission of GCV and has been an essential part of GCV's efforts since its founding more than a century ago. Thank you for your support in continuing this legacy.









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Deedy Bumgardner served as president of the Garden Club of Virginia from 2004-2006. She is a sustaining member of The Augusta Garden Club.

I joined the Green Arrow Society because of what I have enjoyed, learned, and benefitted from as a GCV member over many years. In order to sustain these opportunities and ensure the future of this vital organization, I feel it is very important to promise some benefit from my estate. I would encourage others to do the same.



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The Garden Club of Virginia's restorations of historic public gardens and fellowships in landscape architecture are made possible by the proceeds from Historic Garden Week in Virginia. We thank these sponsors for their gifts of \$1,000 or more.

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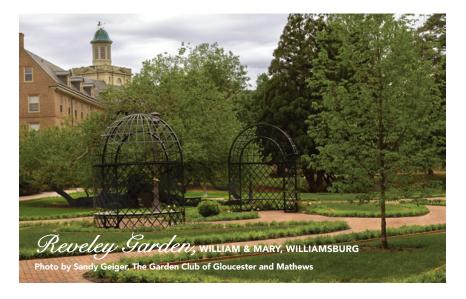
THE ANNUAL FUND helps to provide the resources needed to fulfill the GCV's mission.

THE COMMON WEALTH AWARD provides competitive grant funding for community-based projects led by our member clubs.

THE CONSERVATION FUND supports the GCV's educational programming, fellowships and advocacy to promote conservation and environmental stewardship.

THE ENDOWMENT FUND ensures that the GCV will maintain its leadership role in restoration, conservation, education and beautification well into the future.

THE RESTORATION FUND helps the GCV restore, preserve and protect historic public landscapes and gardens for future generations.



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Rachael Remuzzi	Jimmie Moran	11	Mill Mountain Garden Club	Cathy Lee Alison Conte
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The Mark Rogers Family	Suzanne Rogers		Victoria Alexander	Joyce Stevens
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Gay Savage	Hunter Savage		Nancy Baker	Debbie Lewis
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Treasurer's Report



he Garden Club of Virginia ended Fiscal Year 2023 in a strong financial position. We met our Annual Fund goal of \$175,000, and Historic Garden Week 2023 exceeded its projections.

The Garden Club of Virginia operates on a fiscal year that began July 1, 2022 and ended on June 30, 2023. The budgets for the fiscal year were presented by the Treasurer to the Board of Directors and then to the membership for a vote of approval at the May 2022 GCV Annual Meeting. Beginning in FY2021, the Board began looking at the Operating Budget separate from the Historic Garden Week/ Restoration Committee budget, although this report will review the GCV budgets as one whole.

The Garden Club of Virginia's largest source of revenue is our annual Historic Garden Week. The 2023 tour enjoyed its most impressive financial success in its 90 years with a net income of \$806,968. These monies fund our restoration and ongoing support of historic public landscapes throughout the commonwealth as well as landscape architecture fellowships.

The sources of operating funds for the GCV include membership dues, the annual fund, donations and sponsorships of events, such as the Conservation Forum. In addition, we receive income from publication advertising, workshops and special programs and rental of our carriage house. Any shortfalls are funded by a draw of up to five percent from our endowment fund. For FY23, we took a 3.9 percent draw.

The expenses for the GCV include funding our restoration projects, fellowships and cash awards for community projects, educational programs for members and for the general public, our management/staff salaries (four full-time and three part-time staff), property

maintenance and operations of our headquarters, development and communications and our yearly audit.

To communicate with our membership, we maintain our website, produce a monthly e-newsletter and publish *The Journal* quarterly, leverage the District-at-Large network, as well as meet with the member club presidents three times a year. We also host and facilitate meetings for 17 standing committees and five special committees. We fund two awards each year, the Common Wealth Award and the Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award. The GCV normally funds two classes of fellowships each year. The Conservation Fellowship was completed in FY23 but the two Restoration Fellowships were on hold.

Our assets of approximately \$10.7 million include the Kent-Valentine House property, cash accounts and investment portfolios. At the end of June 2023, the GCV investment portfolios were valued at \$7.7 million, which is approximately 72 percent of GCV's total assets. Our financial records for the 2021-22 fiscal year were audited, and we received a clean opinion. As a 501(c)(3) organization, our Federal Form 990 was filed this year and is available for public review.

The GCV leadership remains prudent in overseeing its finances. Through these actions, we are in a stable financial position as we head into fiscal year 2023-24. We look forward to advancing our mission throughout the commonwealth.

Tricia Mapail

Tricia McDaniel, Treasurer, 2022-2024
GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA

					\$397,409	35%	Management/Staff
					\$375,069	34%	Historic Garden Week
Historic Garden Week	46%	\$ 1,175,107			\$150,753	14%	Programs
Investments	29%	\$ 738,762			\$ 86,362	8%	Kent-Valentine House
Donations	14%	\$ 351,536			\$ 63,362	6%	Administration/Other
Dues	8%	\$ 215,345			\$ 26,552	2%	Restoration*
Other	4%	\$ 95,345			\$ 15,806	1%	Fundraising
In	come S	\$2,576,096			Expenses \$	51,115 ,	028

*GCV did not engage a Landscape Architect in fiscal 2023, thus expenses were lower than usual.

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Andrea Butler



Thank you for helping the Garden Club of Virginia this year

To learn how you can support the Garden Club of Virginia, contact Andrea Butler, Executive Director, at 804-643-4137

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We make every attempt to list donors correctly. Please contact us at (804) 643-4137 or development@gcvirginia.org with updates.



To conserve the gifts of nature, to restore and preserve historic landscapes of the commonwealth, to cultivate the knowledge and love of gardening, and THE MISSION OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA

to lead future generations to build on this heritage



KENT-VALENTINE HOUSE

12 East Franklin Street

Richmond, Virginia 23219

GCVirginia.org

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