

“Classic Athens” National ASA Convention Athens, Georgia April 18-21, 2013

Jim Thornton - Conyers, Georgia

You may know Athens, Georgia, as home of the University of Georgia and the Georgia Bulldogs, but it's also the “Classic City of the South” where rich traditions at the heart of a hip college town create a culture unlike any other.

Nestled below the Blue Ridge Mountains, 70 miles from Atlanta, Athens is a harmony of old and new: Antebellum architecture, contemporary art and eclectic night life, a Victorian era downtown teeming with funky shops and one of the South's most progressive culinary scenes.

Come join us at the convention starting at noon on April 18 through April 21, 2013. Our hotel is the Holiday Inn, 197 E. Broad Street in downtown Athens. We have special room rates at \$109 for both singles and doubles. This rate will include free full breakfast and free parking.

Please use our special Group code (AZA/Association) when making reservations. Call the hotel directly at 706-549-4433.

Thursday, April 18

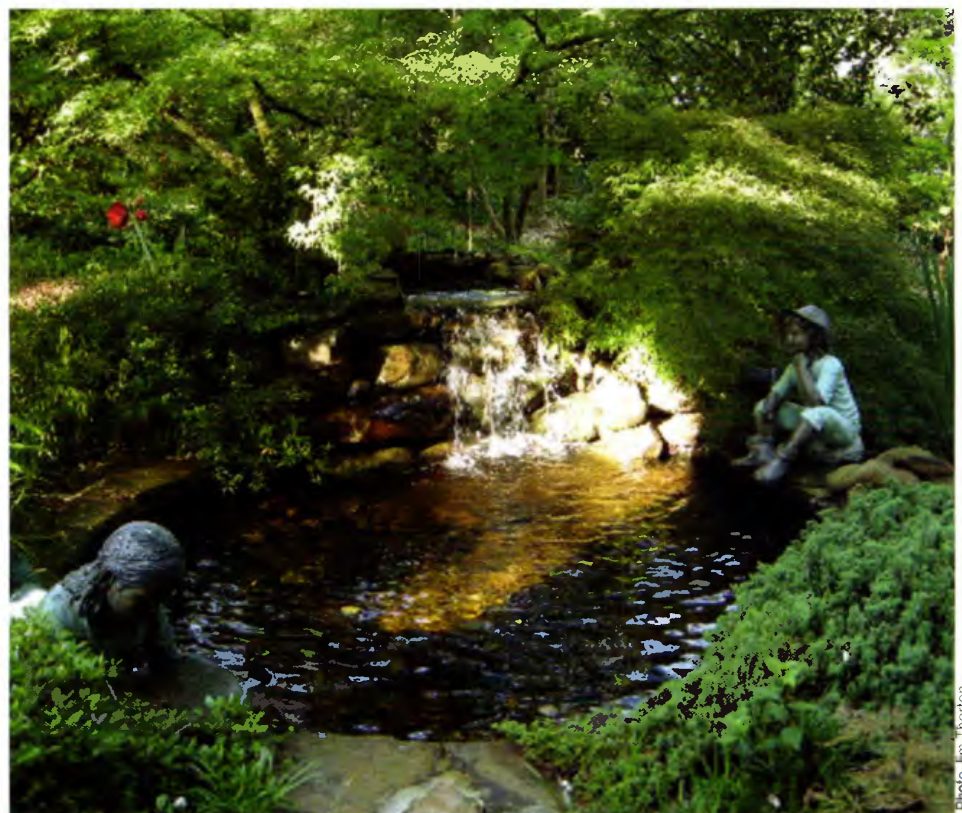
We officially begin at 7 p.m. but registration opens at noon and the ASA board meeting starts at 2 p.m. The plant sale starts at 4 p.m. Come early and settle in for the welcoming meeting.

We're happy to have Dr. Wilf Nicholls, Director of the State Botanical Gardens of Georgia, speak to us. Dr. Nicholls, born in London, England, received his PhD (Botany) from the University of British Columbia in 1984. After several positions with botanical gardens, he came to Athens in 2010 as director of the State Botanical Gardens of Georgia.

Wilf has spent considerable time in the wilds of Morocco, Spain, the Yukon, Alaska, and Labrador collecting plant specimens for research projects.



▲ Athena....Classic Athens



▲ Dooley Garden water scene



Photo Mike Sikes

▲ John and Charlotte Waters home - "Greyside"



Photo State Botanical Gardens

▲ Botanical Garden of Georgia

Friday, April 19

Dooley Garden

We will start boarding our buses at 8:45 a.m., leaving at 9 a.m. to start our tour of local Athens gardens. We start with the home of Vince and Barbara Dooley.

When you think Vince Dooley, you think "Coach", "UGA" and "Bulldogs"! After all, he was the Head coach and Athletic Director at the University

of Georgia for many years and has authored many books, all about football, of course! On retiring, he headed up another team. Again being the "Coach" but in a totally different field...gardening! Starting with the landscape at the house he and wife, Barbara, purchased in 1964, Vince has transformed their home place into a *Southern Living* magazine featured garden.

The estate, some five acres, abounds with trails with collections of Japanese maples, hydrangeas (even one that bears his name), lots of exotic shade plants and of course, azaleas. We'll see

lots of water features, statues, a plant container garden and miniature Japanese garden and teahouse. The Dooley garden is a "work in progress" and by the time we get there, we might be in for a surprise or two!

On top of this, Vince will be on hand to sell and sign his newest garden book!

Waters Garden

With a short walk down the street, we'll visit the garden of John and Charlotte Waters. "Greyside", constructed in 1923, was designed by local architect Fred Orr in the popular Colonial Revival style. The landscape was developed by the current owners as a series of garden rooms, each with its own character. Azaleas, boxwoods, camellias, ferns, hostas, and hydrangeas are accented with garden structures, benches, urns, sculptural objects, and three water features.

Botanical Garden of Georgia

From there we head to the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, where we'll spend some time and have lunch. Look, we've all been on tours of botanical type gardens but this one can and should be at the top of the "best" list.

It's a three hundred plus acre preserve that was set aside by the University of Georgia in 1968 for the study and enjoyment of plants and nature. It's a "living laboratory" for the university and the public. The garden contains a wide variety of natural features and habitats common to the Georgia Piedmont area, and a number of specialty gardens and collections.

The theme gardens, collections, and display beds contain plants of interest throughout the year. For example, the Heritage Garden contains plants of historic interest such as heirloom annuals, perennials, and antique roses. There are fruit crops such as peaches, apples, and pears; There are row crops like cotton, tobacco, and peanuts, as well as a selection of plants native to Georgia.

Then there is the International Garden, which explores the interrelationship of plants and people throughout our civilization. The Herb Garden, Physic Garden, and Bog Garden are located within the context of the International Garden. Special collections represent the flora of the Middle East, Spanish America, American South, and China.

The Shade Garden is made up of seven plazas that represent the seven districts of the Garden Club of Georgia starting with a wisteria-covered arbor on the main plaza providing a commanding view of this garden that features shade tolerant plants. Major collections include azaleas, redbuds, camellias, magnolias, laurels, dogwoods, and viburnums. The Native Flora Garden adjoins the Shade garden where native species, many rare, threatened and endangered, can be found.

The Flower Garden includes roses, dahlias, iris, butterfly plants, a fragrance garden, and collection of other herbaceous plants such as garden annuals and perennials, daylilies, daffodils, and peonies.

Karp/Morrison Garden

Next, we visit the Cindy Karp and John Morrison garden a few miles away but well worth it. One of the Athens Garden Tour selections for the 2012 venue, this five acre property draws the visitor to various focal points including many sculptures, a pond, waterfall, and pool area.

The approach to the garden will be ablaze with color from tulips and azaleas planted en-masse along either side of the driveway.

Giberson Garden

Last, but not least on our tour, is the Tom and Ram Giberson garden, a two and one-half acre lot in a subdivision that has been transformed into an oasis that features waterfalls, koi ponds, and a spirit house, exemplifying a Thai tradition. There is a huge collection of Japanese maples with

numerous groupings of plants surpassing anything you might find in any botanical garden. Ram Giberson has created a landscape on her own that will leave you in awe! We've allowed you plenty of time to let it all sink in and to take plenty of pictures. You won't want to miss the duck and chicken houses...these ain't just "Chicken Coops"! Be sure your camera battery has a full charge!

Friday Speakers

Friday night, we'll go back in time and learn more about the lives of several of our most notable Azalea Society plantsmen.

Maarten van der Giessen will give us some insight into his work and friendship with the late Dr. Eugene Aromi. Dennis Royal, friend and confidant of the late James Harris, will share his experiences with James, who passed away last year. Finally, Jeff Beasley will take us back with tales about a "father-son" relationship with his dad, George Beasley of Transplant Nursery.

We all know about the strides these hybridizers made and the legacy they left in the industry, but what about their personal life? Perhaps we will find out!

Saturday, April 20

Homeplace Garden Nursery

Again, we start boarding our buses about 8:30 a.m., headed for Commerce, Georgia to visit the Homeplace Garden Nursery, owned and operated by the Willis Harden family for over 35 years. Homeplace Gardens grows a wide selection of plants suited for the shade, specializing in Japanese maples, rhododendrons, kalmias, pieris, conifers and other shade-loving plants. All these plant varieties have been carefully selected and grown outdoors to insure they are hardy and well acclimated.

We'll spend enough time for you to wander around the woodlands

where the trails will lead you through a botanical garden-like setting surprising you with exotic trees and shrubs that have been collected over the years, including evergreen and deciduous azaleas. Many collections of flowers should be in bloom along the trails.

Before we leave, we'll enjoy some of Georgia's best BBQ!

Transplant Nursery

Our next stop is Lavonia, Georgia home of Transplant Nursery. If you don't recognize the Transplant name, then how about George and Mary Beasley? Remember, George created some great crosses of deciduous azaleas that are still in trade, like 'Deliverance', 'Nacoochee', and of course the popular 'My Mary' named for his wife.

The nursery, owned and operated by Jeff and Lisa Beasley, offers quality products while expanding their selection of new introductions. They maintain a wide selection of native

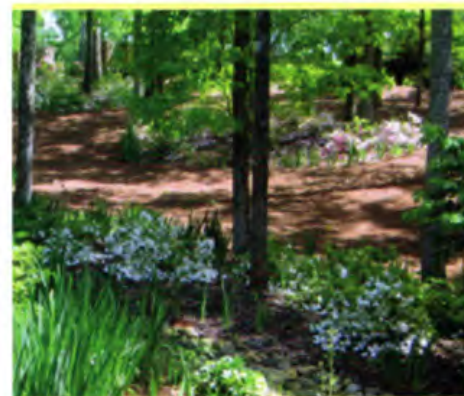


Photo courtesy of Karp/Morrison Garden

▲ Karp/Morrison Garden



▲ Homeplace Nursery container staging area

▼ Native Azalea Garden at Transplant Nursery



and evergreen azaleas, camellias, Japanese maples, and other shade trees and shrubs. Hopefully, their garden of natives will be in bloom for us.

Founders Garden

Heading back to the Holiday Inn, we stop in at the Founders Garden, which was created as a living memo-

rial to the twelve founders of the Ladies Garden Club of Athens...the first garden club of America, organized in 1891.

The layout of the two and one-half acre series of gardens consist of a formal boxwood garden, two courtyards, a terrace, a perennial garden and an arboretum. In addition, the property maintains an old smokehouse for a living museum to the twelve original

garden club ladies. Historical mementos, pictures and a painting depicting the historical meeting are among the most treasured items in the museum.

University of Georgia

Trial Garden

Our convention tours end at the Trial Gardens of the University of Georgia which were started in 1982 by Dr. Allan Armitage, Dr. Michael Dirr, and a number of students of the university. They plowed ground, built walk ways, and got support from the Pan-American seed company. Today, they receive plants and seeds from almost all seed breeding companies in the world, along with material from perennial plant nurseries, individual growers, and gardeners.

The primary functions of the garden are research, teaching, and plant introduction. It is open to the public and professionals alike. Detailed information on the plants under trial is available to all who visit the gardens.

Trials are planted in April and May and consist of major and minor bedding classes, tropicals, vines, plantings of annuals, in over 150 free-standing containers, and three large perennial beds.

Banquet and Annual Meeting

Saturday evening brings us to our annual banquet and business meeting. This year, we are proud to present Dr. Michael A. Dirr as our keynote speaker.

Dr. Dirr worked at a nursery and garden center to pay his way to earn Bachelor and Master of Science degrees at the Ohio State University. He went on to earn a doctorate in plant physiology at the University of Massachusetts, and began his teaching career in 1972 as an assistant professor at the University of Illinois. He became a Mercer Fellow at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University in 1978 and became the Director of the University of Georgia Botanical Garden in 1979. He returned to teach at University of

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Georgia in 1981, and was promoted to Professor in 1984. Dirr is one of the principals of Georgia Plant, Inc., which has introduced many new cultivars to the plant trade.

Dr. Dirr has published more than 300 scientific papers and articles and his book, *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture and Propagation And Uses* has become one of the most widely adopted reference text in the education of horticulture and landscape architecture students. It has sold over 250,000 copies.

This will be a wonderful weekend of beautiful gardens and delightful speakers. The invitation is issued - come experience "Classic Athens".

Jim Thornton is a co-founder and first President of the Oconee Chapter. He has been a director, Vice President, President of the ASA, a chair of various committees and was the first Chairman of the Azalea Research Foundation.

He is a frequent contributor to The Azalean.

Convention Hotel

Holiday Inn

197 E. Broad Street
Athens, Georgia 30601

Direct Number: 706-549-4433

Room rate is \$109; single or double, including free full breakfast and free parking.

When making reservations,
please mention our group code

AZA

to receive our group discount.

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1/8 page	3.65 x 2.35	\$50
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Full page	7.5 x 9.75	\$300
Back cover	8.75 x 11.25	\$450

All rates include four-color process printing.

For more information, visit www.azaleas.org

2013 ASA Convention Schedule

Hosted by the Oconee Chapter

Thursday, April 18

Registration Open	Noon-7 p.m.
ASA Board Meeting	2-4 p.m.
Dinner on your own	
Plant sale	4-7 p.m.
Reception/Cash Bar	6-7 p.m.
Welcome/Speaker	7-9 p.m.

Friday, April 19

Registration	7-8 a.m.
Complimentary Breakfast	
Tour Bus Departs	9 a.m.
Dooley/ Waters Gardens	
Georgia Botanical Gardens	
Lunch	
Karp/Morrison Garden	
Giberson Garden	
Return to Holiday Inn	4 p.m.
Dinner on your own	
Plant sale	5-7 p.m.
Cash Bar	6-7 p.m.
Speakers	7-9 p.m.
Maarten van der Giessen	
Dennis Royal	
Jeff Beasley	

Saturday, April 20

Complimentary Breakfast	
Tour Bus Departs	9 a.m.
Homeplace Gardens Nursery	
Lunch	
Transplant Nursery	
Founders Garden	
UGA Trial Gardens	
Return to Holiday Inn	
Plant Sale	5-7 p.m.
Reception/Cash Bar	6-7 p.m.
Banquet /Meeting	7-10 p.m.
Business Meeting, Awards	
Speaker: Dr Michael Dirr	

Sunday, April 21

ASA Board meeting	8 a.m.
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