

Dudley Farm Journal

Volume 13, Number 4

June 2008



Above: House and front garden, reflecting symmetry of design in the use of the land. MISS MYRTLE'S GARDEN by Herrick H. Smith

People have always sought order and security on the land in a variety of ways. In a hostile environment the land might be cleared to provide clear sighting and timber for building. Where there was little or no hostility, the settler consider location of house and outbuildings, orientation, shade, breezes, storm occurrence, crop and pasture land use, water quantity and quality, privy location, proximity to town and whether the landscape character would provide long term sustenance.

By the time Myrtle Dudley laid out her garden, all of these considerations had resulted in the farmstead one sees today nearly 150 years after settlement on the property.

Miss Myrtle's garden was not an afterthought. She planned, constructed, planted and maintained it after the decision to tether horses somewhere other than the front porch! The house and related outbuildings were fenced, requiring strategic gates to farm buildings and the outside world. The entire farmstead was also fenced in a similar manner that plantations were fenced. In this cultural environment one can appreciate the garden Miss Myrtle conceived and established. It was enjoyed by family and friends, herself throughout her lifetime and the thousands of visitors which the historic farmstead attracted.

The order of the garden is directly related to the main user hallways whose north/south direction, or axis, extends south from the porch, dividing the garden into the parts as the house is divided. The width of the garden mirrors the length of the house and side yards, while its depth reflects a proportion about one-and-one-half times the house height. While the garden appears square it is longer in its east/west dimension. The garden became the invitation to the porch and its center steps and thus to the house and family.

If one stands in the old Gainesville Highway, opposite the garden gate and looking north, and the house doors are open, the resulting vista in the only one of the property whose intent includes both outdoor and indoor space, fashioned by men and Miss Myrtle, and providing useful geometric elegance as the order for future generations to enjoy.

You Are Invited

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Bill Dunk

Plan on acquiring an "Ice Cream headache" when you attend our annual home churned event for Friends of Dudley Farm members and volunteers, on JUNE 8th, from 4 – 6. If you arrive early you might even get to participate in the fun and exercise of hand cranking a churn (some of us have actually done this as children!) Held a little earlier this year to avoid the dog days of summer, this is always a fun time to socialize and reconnect with times gone by. So, mark your calendars and come on out to enjoy a relaxing time and some good refreshment. Oh, if have a favorite flavor and a churn, please ring it to share as we can always use some extras!

See You There!!

June 14th: 10:00 a.m.	Join the final Walk to the Log Homesite Guided tour until January. This walk views the site of the original cabin built by PBH Dudley's father.
June 18th 9:00 - 12.00	Volunteer Picnic and Treasure Hunt. Bring your lunch and sleuthing skills.
July 5th 10:00 a.m.	Agnes and Gene Bierbaum provide dulcimer music on the Marchant Commissary porch.
July 16 9:00-11:00	Final Volunteer meeting until fall. Program will be on the Dudley Collection.
July 21 6:00 p.m.	Friends of Dudley Farm Community Service Organization board meeting. Any member of the CSO is invited to attend the meeting and may join discussion. Visitors' Center.
August, September	No programs planned. The Park and the Farm will be open for self-guided tours, but staff and volunteers will be working on the maintenance and cleaning chores necessary to preserving the historic buildings, fences, etc.

Editor's Note: In this issue of the Journal Herrick Smith, Sally Morrison and Stephen McMenamin highlight some of the architectural and design features of Dudley Farm. At the time that Dudley Farm was settled and over the years evolved to the complex of buildings and fields we now have, people were influenced primarily by the interplay of the resources available and the needs of the family rather than by fashion or societal expectations. However, because local farmers had similar needs and similar resources, there was consistency from one farm to another in much of the design. When you visit Dudley Farm you may find it interesting to look at the features pointed out in the articles of the three contributors.

Letters from Home

by Sally

The ground is so dry that it is cracking in tile-like sections throughout the back yard. Makes me think of sinkholes and such.... The grass crinkles underfoot, brittle and dry. But out in the crop field, the Dudley field corn catches the drops of morning dew and survives. Whippoorwill peas lift their leaves skyward as if in prayer, minimizing the surface for the sun to bake and burn. Stephen and June work diligently, hoeing the sugar cane, cultivating during the "deadening time" when even the toughest weeds uprooted now will die. School children standing in the farmhouse yard can see the men laboring in the field, but make no connection between this work and the food they eat. So we take them into the house garden where they can pull carrots from the ground, water little sweet strawberries, plant some onion bulbs and learn where food really comes from and how it grows.

School field trips are drawing to a close after three months of intensive guided tours, in which the children participate in hands-on activities. They hand pump water for the mule and horse; grind corn to feed the chickens; help with wash day and the hand-wringer; play with hand-made whirly-gigs and run sweet potato relay races. The highlight of all the tours were the ones spear-headed by Cindy Holland and Lee Lovingood through our Learn and Serve Community Grant. Newberry High School students trained to become junior docents and were the guides for 80 Newberry Elementary students, showing them how life was 100 years ago,

It is so good to have the Dudley collection back on site, in its state-of-the-art new building. Triel Lindstrom, of the Bureau of Natural and Cultural Resources, is spearheading the monthly training of staff and volunteers to properly organize and care for the Dudley family artifacts. This collection includes an exceptional collection of everyday clothing, 25 hand-made quilts, historical documents and photos, kitchen cookware, farm furniture and tools, and more....

A few weeks ago we provided a full tour to the National Historic Landmark committee members who traveled here from Washington, DC and will make a determination as to whether Dudley Farm is of national significance and eligible for National Landmark status. They were impressed by the integrity of the farm landscape and structures and very interested in the old road to Gainesville and seemed to enjoy the southern meal in the old kitchen.

The new floor was poured today in the largest chicken house and Tom Thomas has completed the whitewashing of the interior walls and the structural stabilization of the southeast corner; the farmhouse electrical wiring is being analyzed for safety. We will be concentrating our building preservation maintenance and cleaning in August and September when the farm is "put to bed" (we do not offer guided tours during this time). We are following the lead of Great Britain's National Trust, which manages 200 historic properties. Last year's 2 month trial run proved quite productive so we will continue this preservation program.

Our birding volunteers' monthly bird walks have resulted in the identification of 95 species of birds and they will be providing a Dudley bird list. Long-time birding volunteer Alice Tyler monitors the bluebirds nesting on the property. Bluebirds at the visitor center are especially visible. House finches can be seen at the birdbath and there are numerous pairs of nesting woodpeckers. Come join us for the Old Log Homesite guided tour on June 14. This will be the last of these special guided tours until January. Please make your reservation by calling 472-1142.

DONATION THANK YOU

Spar Varnish
Plant books
Push plow
Mortar supplies &
Photo documentation
Rhode Island Red rooster
Cow worming and wrangling
Cow wormer supplies
Clothing patterns
Grandmother's sewing cabinet
Antique tins for commissary
Electrical scope of work proposal
Kestrel (hawk) box mounted at
visitor center
Readings Program for Earth Day
Cloth grocery bags for Earth Day
Primitive wood rake & pitchfork
Cash donation for guided tour
Sugar Cane
Hickory "Mule Ear" chairs &
1 unfinished quilt
Cracker Culture book
Wood toys
Tree-sure Hunt booklet:
Created & paid expenses;
Also, Florida Field Guide &
baked goods for all
Roselle & chocolate for vols
Quilt top & lace
Membership in the
American Livestock Breeds Conservancy
School bell
Handmade broom-corn broom
Ironing board and Fla. Milk bottles
Basket & hats
Old-fashioned phone
Tram cushions, hand-made
Compiling Volunteer packets
Embroidered linens
Commissary management

Newberry Ace Hardware
Dick Walker
Deanne Moler
Tom Thomas

Jonna Weaver \\
Buck & Jed Mitchell & Jack Gillen
Chiefland Farm & Supply (Wes Grant)
Terry Stidham

Kay & Larry Hall
John Comley
Bob Simons

Mimi Carr
Katherine Armstrong
Cathy Heath
UF Horticulture Dept.
Jim Johns

Barbara Mitchell
Tommy Dees
Karen & Al Smoke & Steven Carmichael

Susan Harris
Bob Spangenberg
Lois Ann O'Malley

Sam Getzen
Becky Dean
Bill Dunk
Carolyn Hufty
Anne Martin-Segrini
Charmalie & Jeffrey Young
Clare Shoemyen
Marilyn Walker & Susan Preston
Pat Piper
Katherine Armstrong

If you don't see your donation credited, please contact the park office 472-1142 & let us know. we appreciate your donations.. and hope not to overlook anyone's generosity

WISH LIST

Fencing materials: Heart pine or cedar fence posts; quality used hogwire and barb wire.
Modern mower with bag attachment (for catching the infamous "fireweed")
Bushel baskets; Lard cans
20 gallon wash tub - wood or galvanized
2-gallon metal buckets
Grant writer
Seamstress to make "burlap" sacks out of canvas (to withstand kids races games)

To arrange a contribution, please call the Dudley Farm Historical State Park office at 472-1142

Cane Day Committee

Yep, it's about time to begin thinking about our 2008 Cane Day. While our first committee meeting won't be until August, we'll be contacting and scheduling Vendors and Musicians in July. Our Committee meets about once a month from August until the big day and we could use a new face or two. If you haven't been on the steering committee but have an interest in assisting it please contact Bill Dunk at 331-4551 or wdunk@cox.net. No nonsense meetings last only about an hour and are scheduled as infrequently as possible so don't be afraid.

CSO Board Of Directors Meeting Highlights

Lee Wiltbanks, Secretary

In its March meeting, the Board discussed and approved the following items:

- \$500.00 for shelving in the Collections Building.
- An additional \$500.00 for the development of campsites for use by long-term volunteers who work on the farm.
- Donating "Evening at Dudley" tickets to SouthArc, and other supporters.

The following items were discussed and referred to committees or individuals for further study:

- Lifetime and other categories of membership.
- Board vacancy.
- Electrical wiring in the farm house.
- Coordination with the Farm Tractor/Toy Show.
- Participation at Farmers' Market.



The Dudley Collection Has Come Home!

Triel Lindstrom and Sally Morrison position collection items in new Collection Building.

SEASONAL ACTIVITIES

Summer Fruit Harvest Days: Peaches, pears and figs ripen from June through August.

Historic Preservation in Progress: During August and September staff and volunteers carry out the preservation projects necessary to maintain this National Register property. The farm buildings will be closed during these months.

HELP NEEDED

If you are interested in editing or helping with production of the Dudley Farm Journal please contact Nancy McIntosh at nmcintosh9@cox.net or by calling 352-472-6859. Her term as editor concludes with the August issue.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER
Anne Leivonen Hair

Building of our Citizen Service Organization, known as Friends of Dudley Farm, Inc.

Miss Myrtle Dudley, being the last of the 3rd generation of Florida Dudleys, had inherited the farm her grandfather started. In 1983 Miss Myrtle gave 24 acres of the original farmstead to the people of Florida and the Florida Park Service became the manager. Buck Mitchell and a Steering Committee met many times to set up the by-laws of the CSO. The first issue of The Dudley Farm Journal was published in 1996.

Looking back through the CSO records one can see how our group has grown from a hand full of members who worked hard to get the organization up and running. Couples joined as individuals in order to have a quorum to conduct business (since a family membership was entitled to one vote only, but individual memberships each had one vote). The builders of the CSO were the following first twenty CSO members of whom most served on the steering committee. (The thirteen whose names are bolded continue to be active members; those whose names are in parenthesis are deceased.):

Dale & Annette Kendrick--Buck Mitchell--Betty Wood--Martha "Mardi" Krause--Albert Krause--Dorothy Carter--Eugene Carter--**Don & Sandra Davis--Peggy Mitchell--Sally Morrison--**(Jerry Hudson)--Evelyn McKoy--Lu Merrit--**Samuel P "Sam" & Geraldine Getzen--Joe & Beverly Moxley--****Renee Andrews & Tom Thomas--Katharine G. Barry--Karen & Ed Sherwood--**(Joseph DeLaney)--Martha Ann Lott .

Through the years Friends of Dudley Farm, Inc. has grown because our group's many leaders/volunteers share Miss Myrtle's "vision and sense of history" for the preservation of Dudley Farm. In the year 2000, when the park opened, we had 110 members---by the year 2007 the membership had doubled to 221 members.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mary Anne, Lawrence G "Larry" & Ariel Hilker
Candice David
Kathleen Martin
Colleen, Stuart & Lindsay Perkins
Margaret & Donald "Don" DeGeorge
Louis W & Alicia Gutierrez
Stephen McMenamain & Joy Cotton
Judy B. Shaak

Philip Brass & Nicole Lucos
Joey Malphurs
Paula Russo
John & Patricia Johnston
Daniel "Dan" Steven
Marion W. Van Alstyne
Karen L & Emerson J Annis, Jr.

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Revenue From Memberships
June 2008

Members	208	Receipts:	Dues	4492.50
			Donations	<u>2226.00</u>
			TOTAL	6718.50

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Money Donations

03-09-2008 thru 04-29-2008

\$1---\$24

Marion W. Van Alstyne
Georgia Guin & Henry Reidelberger

\$25---\$49

Stan & Charity Blomeley
Rose Koenig & Tom Mirti
Lilly Sanchez
Karen & Emerson Annis, Jr.

\$75---\$99

Charles & Lisa Kaste

AND ON THE FARM.....

by Stephen McMenamin

Gardening is an attempt to control your environment, and there is a feeling of helplessness when it comes to the weather, pests, and disease. Winnie Dudley wrote to Edna in 1929—"We have had so much hard luck of late I hope it will let up for a while."

Two aspects we can control are location and layout of the garden. Ideally, these aspects would optimize the factors need for a successful garden. The primary factors for a successful garden are water, sun, and fertile soil. The secondary factors are alignment and proximity.

I will begin with water since it is on my mind so often now. I would lose sleep if I didn't complain about the dry weather. Perhaps that is why farmers got together to talk so much, to maintain sanity during dry times like these.

Before leaving the farm each day, I check the Doppler radar. Last night was the first time I looked with hope, and watched as a line of thunderstorms appeared out of nowhere along the I-75 corridor. As I left the visitor center, I looked east and saw the lightning, but the storms moved away, and I took it personally. Still, it is a useful experience, not being able to irrigate the crops and vegetables, because it hints at what life was like for the Dudleys during a drought.

Many pioneers in Florida chose the low lying areas to plant their gardens. Thanks to gravity, low lying areas stay wet longer than surrounding areas, and also have more humus, mostly from leaves falling or washing in during the heavy rains. The Dudleys chose the low lying area east of the farmhouse as their first garden site. Right now, with so little rainfall of late, that is one of the few areas on the farm that looks vibrant. The soil there is fertile, having some clay and a good build up of humus. The farmhouse is high and dry, and the original garden low and wet.

Sun isn't usually a problem in Florida, but it is unlikely the Dudleys kept many tall trees near their gardens. The crops and vegetables that the Dudleys grew all do best in full sun. I remember one year when we grew cane in a shady area. The stalks were so crooked that they could have been used as Hula Hoops.

The last major element is the fertility of the soil. The Dudleys chose land that had a good deal of clay, some on the surface, but most lying underneath. Clay is a good source of minerals, and helps retain moisture. In the crop fields, one can see the difference in plant growth and tell just how fertile an area is, generally an indication of how much clay is nearby.

Even with fertile soil, soil improvement was an essential aspect of maintaining a productive garden year after year. The Dudleys practiced crop rotation with cows to increase fertility in the fields, and chickens were used in the vegetable gardens. The vegetable gardens that are fenced in west of the farmhouse were rotated as chicken yards, providing manure and weeding most fowl.

The secondary elements are alignment and proximity. All the Dudley gardens are close to the house and also the water sources. The garden would be tended daily, especially when harvesting, and having the gardens near the house would have reduced the amount of work. Theft might also have been a problem, so the closer to the house the safer the garden.

Finally, if one has a choice, it is better to plant rows aligned North-South, then plants will receive an equal amount of sunlight on each side and grow more uniform. In flat land, like most of Florida, the layout of the rows is almost unlimited, so the optimum North-South would have been chosen most frequently. The Dudley gardens are all aligned this way.

As I finish writing this, the rain has begun. So please disregard my previous complaints. We've just had a bit of good luck!



Stephen Talks to Vounteers and Staff about Gardening at Dudley Farm

Friends of Dudley Farm State Park
P.O. Box 245
Newberry, FL 32669



Above: Evening at Dudley guests listening to hear their numbers called for a door prize. Many of the door prizes were provided by the Wednesday Craft Group. **Below:** Enjoying the desserts and good company at Evening at Dudley.

