

Pretty Posies Publication and Exhibition to Debut in October

They're simply gorgeous to witness, the blooms and glories festooning Grandmother's Garden on the grounds of Duncan House, headquarters of the Birmingham Historical Society at Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark. What more could we ask of them beyond their beauty? As it turns out we can ask a lot, for each of the plantings contains medicinal properties to cure what ails you, to soften a symptom or two.

Pretty Posies, Healing Powers—An Herbal Primer whisks you into the world of medicinal plantings with illustrations by five Birmingham watercolorists—Sumter Coleman, Gail Cosby, Ellen Erdreich, Louise McPhillips, and Jane Reed Ross—inspired by Grandmother's Garden.

Author and noted herbalist Maria Antonia Viteri supplies an engaging guide to the blooms, the buds and shoots—and their soothing uses over time.

"This book is a fascinating combination of lovely artwork and detailed accounts of historic methods of herbal healing that can be successful yet today," says Marjorie L. White, Director of the Birmingham Historical Society, which will publish the volume in October 2019. "You leave the final page with a heightened under-

standing of simpler eras when the backyard was the pharmacy for our ancestors.

"Viteri, who has extensively studied herbs and their healing properties, walks us through the subject with ease and eloquence. You gain both inspiration and education."

The illustrated guide focuses on Southern/Appalachian traditions—from usage and sources to traditions of teas, salves, and tinctures. Chapters feature Backyard Weeds, Southern Soothers, Culinary Herbs, Teas, and Roses; herbs include Dandelion, Elder, Passionflower, Rosemary, Sage, Solomon's Seal, and Roses, used to heal or help coughs and colds, digestion, sore muscles, and more.

"Viteri introduces us to powers and potential of flowers and plants we've seen all our lives and appreciated solely for their beauty. This book goes beyond the beauty and creates new possibilities for the reader," says White.

TO PURCHASE: From Birmingham Historical Society, One Sloss Quarters, Birmingham, AL 35222 or Amazon. \$19.95.

BOOK DETAILS: 27 illustrations of medicinal herbs, all grown at Grandmother's Garden; 72 pages, full color; additional illustrations of the garden.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Maria Antonia Viteri, a native of Mobile, has studied Western and Southern Appalachian herbal traditions in Alabama and California. Viteri, a Master Gardener, is also trained in Architecture and Landscape Design. She currently resides in Sterrett, Alabama.

Pretty Posies Powerful Healing An Herbal Primer



Birmingham Historical Society

Viteri to Lead September and October Walks and Talks

Join us at Grandmother's Garden for our fall programs on the Second Saturdays of September and October. Our programs will feature Native American and German contributions to Birmingham's Foodways. They will be held INSIDE beginning at 10:30 a.m. and then we'll stroll the garden. Antonia Viteri will treat us to the history and uses of corn and of hops. Here's a preview of her talks.

September 14 at 10:30 a.m.

Corn is an important crop of the Americas, first thought to have been grown over 5600 years ago in Mexico, by the Mayan and Aztec tribes.

Both then and now, young corn is used as a vegetable, and the dry kernels are ground into flour, the basis for multiple food variations found in African and North and Latin American cuisine. Many cultures around the world have lived on this versatile crop, as everything on a corn plant is useable.

In addition to its importance as a food source, corn also played a ceremonial role in many native cultures, with sacred corn pollen or cornmeal being used as ritual adornment and spiritual offering. Its cultivation in the Birmingham area has provided sustenance for humans and livestock.

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Maria Antonia Viteri

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October 12 at 10:30 a.m.

Hops are the flowers or seed cones of the plant *Humulus lupulus*. It is used as a bittering, flavoring, and stability agent in beer making, which imparts a floral, fruity, or citrus flavor and aroma. Studies indicate hops to be effective in reducing stress and anxiety due its medicinal properties that support the nervous system. In addition, its flavonoid content has potent antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties that assist the body in balancing elevated cholesterol and high blood sugar. German brewers very successfully introduced beer making into Birmingham in the mid 1880s. Philip Shillinger's brewery on Southside dominated the growing trade.

Society News

Strategic Plan to Be Reported on at the 2020 Annual Meeting

Society Trustee Joe Limbaugh plans to wrap up the Society's strategic planning venture by February 24, the date set for the Annual Meeting of the Society at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. With bated breath, we await this plan.

New Book to Focus on the "Emperor of Vestavia"

The Sterne Agee Foundation has provided a generous gift to underwrite a forthcoming publication honoring George B. Ward. Best known as the creator of his Shades Mountain estate with its reproductions of the Roman temples of Vesta and Sybil set in glorious gardens, Ward served as alderman, Mayor of Birmingham, and President of its first City Commission and a founder of Sterne Agee. This firm began in 1919 when Ward and Mervyn H. Sterne entered into a partnership. Marjorie White and Katie Tipton have been immersed in Ward's many scrapbooks that are chock full of newspaper clippings and memorabilia documenting Birmingham from 1898 through 1940. We look forward to presenting George Ward's campaigns to build up Birmingham as a "City Beautiful." It's a great story about a remarkable man and his dedication to our community.

Women in the Cornfield

The women pictured above in their North Birmingham garden are Society Member Peggy Balliet's mother Eula Belle Fletcher Gafford, her grandmother Cora Bertha Sanford Fletcher, great-grandmother Elizabeth Ann Douglas San-



ford, and great-great-grandmother Emma Blackwood Douglas, photographed circa 1915. Peggy permitted the Birmingham project of the 1970s to copy her family photograph and deposit a print in the Birmingham Public Library Archives that now will have correct identification.

Society Calendar

Saturday, September 14, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Walk and Talk (Corn) at Grandmother's Garden at Sloss Quarters, 10 North 32nd Street.

Saturday, October 12, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Walk and Talk (Hops) at Grandmother' Garden.

Sunday, October 13, 3-5 p.m.

Garden Party, Publication Celebration, and Exhibit of watercolors from *Pretty Posies*, *Healing Powers—An Herbal Primer* by featured artists Sumter Coleman, Gail Cosby, Ellen Erdreich, Louise McPhillips, and Jane Reed Ross, all Birmingham residents, at Grandmother's Garden.

October 15-November 30

Watercolors from *Pretty Posies*, *Healing Powers—An Herbal Primer*. Exhibition, Birmingham Botanical Gardens Library Gallery.

February 24, 2020, 7 p.m.

Annual Meeting of the Society, Birmingham Botanical Gardens.



Corn (left) and hops (below) growing at Grandmother's Garden

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

www.bhistorical.org
Birmingham, Alabama 35222
One Sloss Quarters

