



Sprigs and Sprouts

Limestone County Master Gardeners Association

Volume 2, Issue 1

Adma D. "Flick" Hargroder (1913-2004)



A beloved Limestone County Master Gardener (class of 1997) died on February 01, 2004, at the age of 91. His name was Adma D. Hargroder, known to many by his nickname "Flick." (This nickname goes back to when he was a little boy with a cherished kitten. When a painter got some paint on the kitten, Flick was consoled by being told it was just a little *flick* of paint.)

Mr. Hargroder led an exemplary life. We Master Gardeners feel honored to have shared a part of that exemplary life for the past few years. In this newsletter, as a tribute to him, are some of our memories.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Wouldn't some sunshine be great? I look out the window and see weeds blooming and setting seed in a chilly rain while I fret inside. Daffodils, snowdrops, hellebores, and flowering quince are beginning to bloom, and I am ready for some serious gardening.

I look forward to the coming year with the Limestone County Master Gardeners. Marylou Beck, our new Vice President, is working on a number of interesting programs for our regular meetings. She and I, and Treasurer John O'Neill and Secretary Carole Barron would like to include some field trips to members'

gardens and other points of interest in the coming year, if the members can take time out from our personal and LCMGA gardening duties. Please share with us any ideas you have for fun and informative activities.

I hope all of you can find one or more MG projects to work on this year. It's a great way to contribute to our community and to get to know our fellow Master Gardeners better.

Kathryn Davis, MG 1998

Shoots of interest:

- *Guess what's sprouting up at the next meeting?*
- *We have new Officers and Graduates.*
- *Huge Plant Sale slated for April 24th.*
- *Gather your LCMG memories for the scrapbook.*



TRIBUTES TO FLICK

I remember Flick as being a man of quality. When the garden was behind the Friendship Church, I lived the closest so I usually arrived early. Flick would be waiting. Should the weather be bad, the fields muddy, whatever the condition, if it could be done, he would be the first to try.

When we set up the forms for the concrete pads at the recycling site, only three of us showed up. The work was hard. The weather was hot. Flick got very tired and rested often, but the thought of leaving the two of us there alone never entered his mind.

Flick was there when we filled the boxes for the worm-composting demonstration. When it came time to take the boxes to the schools, he volunteered for as many schools as any of us. His love of talking to the kids was apparent.

Later, after the composting program was over, a teacher at Clements School asked for a follow-up talk. I agreed to go; Flick volunteered as my assistant. The day was pretty and warm, so I left early thinking to stand in the sun for a while. Flick was there waiting for me. When we got to the class and started, I became the assistant, and he gave a great worm-composting demonstration. The teacher was grateful, and I was proud.

He was always supportive of the Fall Festival at the armory. Be it worm-composting demo, bird-houses, or whatever, he would be there.

At the plant sale, his tomatoes were always among the best. He would always come early and stay late. When a club meeting was good and a lot accomplished, it was Flick who would come up to you and tell you it was good.

Flick will be remembered and missed by many.

David Linn, MG 1996

I remember Flick Hargroder as we went on disaster relief missions together. He would call everybody and me until he got us all together and ready to go. We went to Florida after Hurricane Andrew. It was a long, hard trip. Flick was there as long as anybody. We worked 12 to 16 hours a day, and rode for an hour after we got off work, for 10 days straight. Flick was still in there.

We went to Mississippi after ice storms. Flick got us together as usual. He worked like everyone else. Tornadoes or floods – in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, Iowa, anywhere – Flick was there. We stayed in churches, slept on tables and floors. I remember Flick would put his table close to the light switch and call out “Lights out” or “Bed time.” Unless everyone else stopped, Flick would not stop. He thought of everything we needed for the job, and everyone for a job. Flick was honest with everyone and everything he did.

Flick was as good a man as I ever knew.

Ed Hall, Honorary Member

TRIBUTES TO FLICK

I remember Flick (AD) Hargroder as a very important person in my life. Actually, he and his wife, Lou, together were an inspirational couple. I have known Flick many years, but I only really got to know him in 1991. That was the year I retired and started helping more in some of our church work and soon found out Flick was a dedicated leader and worker. He went about doing his job quietly without a lot of fanfare.

He led our church disaster team when it went to Miami to help provide assistance after Hurricane Andrew hit that area. Flick was 80 years old then, and I wondered what he could do to help. I was 20 years younger and thought that I was maybe getting too old to be there myself. I soon found out Flick was a determined leader and laborer - age didn't matter to him. We worked about 15 hours a day for the 2 weeks we were there, and Flick worked just as hard or harder than any of us. He never tried to get the easiest or best jobs. It is evident now that he would always take any job available as he did on this work in Miami. Flick pushed a wheelbarrow the 2 weeks he was there moving garbage from kitchen and campsite to the dumpsite.

For the years I have known him I never saw him angry or upset or negative about anyone or anything. Even when he didn't agree with something, he would only smile and do it his way. It was a great 2 weeks to be with him and his wife, Lou. I learned a lot from a great little old man.

When Flick enrolled in the Limestone Master Gardener program and started helping in the community garden that provided food to needy families, I was coordinating that garden work. Flick became one of the most dependable workers we had. Even at his age, it was hard – or almost impossible – to make him take an easier job. One day we had stick green beans that needed to be gathered, but it had rained hard the night before. The work had already been scheduled, and the workers couldn't be called to cancel that day's work. So all the workers, including Flick, met at the garden. We were discussing and trying to decide whether it was too muddy to work. Then, I looked out in the garden and saw Flick and his wife already with buckets in hand gathering beans. It was very muddy. In fact, it was over the top of Flick's shoes. But, seeing them out there made the decision to pick easy. It was so muddy that day that Flick lost one of his boots in the mud. It was about 2 weeks later in the garden that he found his lost boot.

This writing could go on for many pages telling the good things about Flick. But I will end by saying it was great having him as part of my life.

Jerry Franks, MG 1996

I remember Brother Flick. He was a wonderful Christian man. He was a leader in everything he did. Every job had to be perfect. He was always faithful to his church and to his Sunday-School class. He touched many people with his faithfulness. I am a better Christian because of him and his standards. Thanks for the memory, Brother Flick.

Ed & Martha McCracken, MG 1998

TRIBUTES TO FLICK

I remember Flick. When Flick moved to Athens to be near his daughter, Mary Gayle, he became one of the members of the First Baptist Church who showed concern for those who might need special attention. He served well on any committee to which he was appointed. My husband especially liked Flick for they had some shared interests. Both were Christians, Masons, and enjoyed discussing real estate. My husband was impressed with Flick and his kind, courteous ways. He was respected and loved by First Baptist members, and we miss him. His absence has left a void in our fellowship.

I got to know Flick and his wife, Lou, better when I became a Master Gardener. He was faithful to the organization, enjoyed the monthly meetings, and was a contributor. Flick and Lou supported the garden, which was sponsored by the Master Gardeners. I never will forget how they helped harvest corn and package it to be delivered. It was hot, and we were sweating, but they didn't stop until the job was finished. That was the kind of man he was – he finished what he started.

May God continue to bless Lou and Mary Gayle, as I know they miss him.

Attie Ming, MG 1999

We remember Flick. We were scheduled to set up a booth at the Fiddlers Convention in Oct. 03. Flick and his wife, Lou, volunteered to help set it up. We had planned to start at 8AM that morning, but it was so very cold, we decided to wait until 9AM. We could not reach Flick to let him know the change of plans. When we got there, he and Lou had been sitting there waiting on us for about an hour. Whatever he said he would do, you could count on.

We also remember Flick and Lou inviting us to their home several years ago to help us because we had decided to build a greenhouse. They treated us to a good visit and a wealth of knowledge on building and maintaining a greenhouse. It seems there were few things they enjoyed more than sharing their gardening knowledge with others.

David & Elaine Webster, MG 1999

I remember Flick driving back and forth many times bringing mulch to the triangles from Collins Supply when we needed it on workdays. His wife, Lou, always went with him because he was color-blind, and she had to tell him when to stop and go at the red lights. That did not discourage him a bit. The mulch was available when needed. Meeting, outings and workdays won't be the same without him.

Nancy Robinette MG 1993

I remember Flick. Mr. Hargroder giving me encouragement about 10 years ago when we began the Spring Plant sale. He encouraged me to continue to lead this effort. My experience with him, I am sure, was not unique. He was able to effectively encourage others because he worked so hard himself. He did not ask others to do what he was unwilling to do.

We would all desire to “grow old gracefully.” I believe Flick did that so very well. He worked far past the age when many men become inactive, and his “Let's get the job done” attitude continued with him until the very end. He was very interested in the work of the Master Gardeners and in many other community projects. I will miss him.

Carl Witty, MG 1992

TRIBUTES TO FLICK

I remember Flick Hargroder. Beyond being a nice, friendly guy, Flick was an inspiration. He was a good, methodical worker, who managed to out-do younger folks by pacing himself. He would work a while, rest a while, work a while, until the job was done. I will miss his steady presence.

Jerry Davis, MG 1994

I remember Flick showing up at the Community Garden and some people wondering, "What can he do (at his age)?" They soon learned that he could pull a whole row of corn while they were still hunting their buckets. He was always the first one there and the last to leave. He would pitch right in, never wanting others to do for him. Everybody liked him. Since his death, learning even more about Flick has been a revelation as to just how tall a man can stand. He was a dear kind gentlemen involved in many community activities, among which were: AARP, Habitat for Humanity, delivering Meals on Wheels, and making home repairs with the First Baptist Brotherhood. At his 90th birthday party he was in a wheelchair due to recent surgery, but he was up and about in no time. As the saying goes, it's hard to keep a good man down. At his funeral we learned that he had applied once for an FBI job. Chances are he would have straightened them out had he been hired.

Various Members

I remember Flick. Several generations ago, children were taught some fundamental values such as honesty, hard work, and genuine love for their neighbors. Under such conditions, they became good citizens. Flick Hargroder embodied these values. He was honest and hard working. He had a genuine love for God and his fellow man. He was a real gentleman who was always ready to help others. His passing leaves a tremendous void in the world, and I will truly miss him.

Doug Chapman, Limestone County Extension Agent

My loving memories are too numerous to list, but I must say he was the best Daddy anyone could ever hope to have. He was a man after God's own heart. I will always miss him.

Mary Gayle Ermert, MG 1998



If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

James 2:15-17 NKJV

The Limestone County Master Gardener Association extends deepest sympathies to member Lou Ella Hargroder on the loss of her Husband and to member Mary Gayle Ermert on the loss of her Father.

Plans for the Community Garden

by Jim Ladner, MG 2003

At the March 2004 meeting, John O'Neill, outgoing Garden Administrator, provided an overview of the challenges for the Community Garden project this year with the top challenge being that there are no interns this garden season. Last year over half of the recorded hours were by interns. This led to a discussion about available volunteers and selection of a new administrator. A significant number of volunteers committed to be workers but were not able to commit the time required to be the administrator. A compromise solution was reached when Pamela Gibbs accepted the lead for the Triangles Committee (Supported by members Martha McCracken and Karin McAndrew) and Jim Ladner agreed to "transfer" to the Garden Administrator

position with the holdover committee members of Jerry Franks, Ed Hall, Jerry Hooper, B. Shah, David Webster, Martha McCracken, and Carl Witty.

Ed Hall, our tireless worker and garden host, pointed out that it is now time to do the preliminary work of soil testing (submitted 3/9) and planning, along with the preliminary ground prep (which he has already done). Planting will be done between April 15th and 30th as soil conditions permit. Ed also pointed out that there is sufficient room in the garden for members to plant their "own rows." This might be a way to expand the available produce beyond the basic corn/beans/tomatoes offered last year. Final selection of varieties has not been made. What are your favorites?

If you have worked in the garden in the past and can help us over this year with no interns available, it will be greatly appreciated.



*We need a leader!
Call Jim to Volunteer
for Garden Duty*

Lessons learned during last season:

- ❖ *If you plant corn close to crepe myrtle, you will have Japanese beetles. They were overcome even with the application of Sevin.*
- ❖ *It was proven from a previous year that walk-through gaps in a 140-foot tomato row are a good thing.*
- ❖ *It was proven that if you allow open ground between the last cornrow and your first row of beans that grass will grow there.*
- ❖ *It was proven that if you persevere, the bounty would follow. 2003 yield: Corn (107 dozen); pole beans (71 gal.); tomatoes (106 gal.) as the association commitment. Also squash (30 gl.) and cucumber (10 gal.) from Ed Hall surplus.*
- ❖ *It was proven that you should talk to your customer. Our packaging should have been "smaller."*
- ❖ *Weed cloth under tomatoes reduces work.*
- ❖ *Growing beans on fence panels is better/quicker than using poles.*
- ❖ *Communication, speed and flexible workers are a must. If you volunteered and have e-mail, please let the administrator know.*

New Officers

New officers were elected at the February 09th meeting. They are as follows:

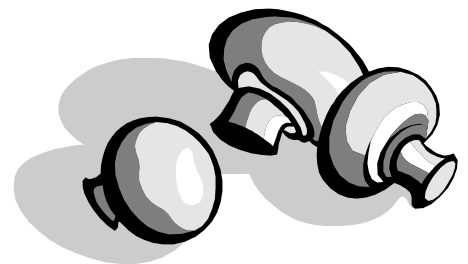
President: Kathryn Davis
Vice President: Marylou Beck
Secretary: Carole Barron
Treasurer: John O'Neill

Many thanks go out to the previous administration. Our new officers will have some tough shoes to fill.

Upcoming Programs

Don't be caught sitting under a log for our April 12th meeting. Our special guest speaker will be David Hayes from the Huntsville Mushroom Society. The noon meeting will be at the County Agent's Meeting room, and it should prove to be captivating. The monthly meeting will follow the presentation.

For May we have Gary Atkins planned to discuss orchids. Bring your questions and lunch for this May 10th noon meeting at the County Agent's Meeting room.



Birdie Thornton Center

Last year we were asked to help with the new greenhouse at the Birdie Thornton Day Placement Center. It took a few months to get the project started, but since its inception this year it has turned out to be one of the most rewarding and enjoyable projects that Limestone County Master Gardeners Association has.

The Birdie Thornton Day Placement Center is for mentally retarded adults. Some of the clients that attend the Center actually work for various companies assembling parts. They also learn grooming, cooking, computer skills, and exercise.

The newest addition for the center is the greenhouse built with a generous grant from Steelcase and funding from Limestone Association for Retarded Citizens. It is a 30 X 30 building fully equipped with heaters, fans, potting tables, water, drains, and everything

needed for a quality greenhouse. Master Gardeners have been working at the greenhouse with ten clients at a time for the last three months. Some of the projects have been rooting sweet potatoes, transplanting marigolds and impatiens, propagating "umbrella" plants, and planting bulbs. The clients get so excited when they do this work and cannot wait until they grow or bloom. The employees from the Center tell us they continuously want to go back to see if something has grown. Future plans are to sow seeds of vegetables and flowers that the clients will be able to see grow and produce. The smiles, hugs, and comments from these people make every moment spent there worthwhile.

Tommy Hutton is the chairperson of this project. Other

by Jeanette Hargrove, MG 1999

members that have worked on the project are David and Elaine Webster, Jim and Liz Ladner, Mary Gayle Ermert, Jerry Franks, Ed Hall, John O'Neill, and Jeanette Hargrove. Workdays are scheduled every two weeks. If you have an interest in helping with this worthwhile project, please call Tommy Hutton at 232-3984.



Triangles

After a long wait for the utilities reconstruction at the Hobbs/Hwy 31 Triangle, the area is undergoing replanting. The welcome arrival of the daffodils has caused favorable comments and recent work to corral the wayward blooms into masses has helped tidy the appearance.

The pansies have been repositioned and are benefiting from fertilizer and warmer temps.

A February workday was used to prune the barberry, nandinas, and liriopse. A

plan for replacing foundation plants and establishing defined areas for our annuals is being implemented. Areas of planned work include: damage replacement planting, recurring activities and new initiatives.

A Triangle Handbook has been started to document the work, contacts and procedures used in the care of the triangles. This may become part of the association handbook mentioned in the February meeting.

by Jim Ladner, MG 2003

Members should feel free to help "police" the triangles. This is a never-ending process in this high traffic zone. Don't wait for a workday!

Do you have collections for our Scrapbook? Assist Penley Rees in archiving our history with your contributions.

Annual Spring Plant Sale

The Annual Plant Sale is April 24th at the Farmer's Market near downtown Athens. Carl Witty (232-0150) is the chairman for the sale and has issued a challenge to make this sale the best on record. Give Carl a call to see how you can help. He needs plants, baskets, buckets, magazines and books, and

other gardening related items.

Begin bringing your merchandise at 7:00 am April 24th for Carl and his team to price and display. The sale begins at 8:00 at which time you and the public will then be able to purchase quality stock and other items from your fellow

Time to divide and plant!

Master Gardeners.

Subcommittees for the Sale will be made at the April 12th meeting

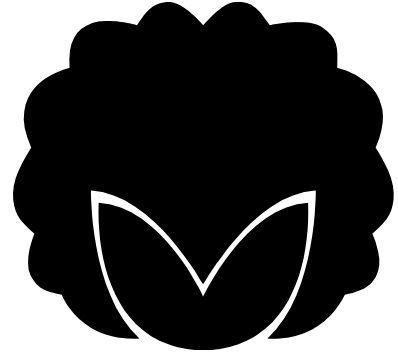


Get those seeds in the ground now for the Plant Sale!

2004 Cotton Yield for Limestone County

We Master Gardeners don't usually grow cotton, but we do follow with pride the cotton yield of our county. After all, Limestone is the third smallest county in Alabama and the state's best cotton-producing county. This year was our third best year. We harvested 64,230 acres, averaging 785# per acre for a yield of 100, 015 bales. In 2001 the yield was 113,664 bales. Our record year was 1994 with a yield of 121,356 bales.

Who hasn't felt proud driving in the county through vast fields of white in the summer, occasionally seeing cars with out-of-state licenses pulled over so the occupants could see up-close this wonder of a cotton plant which we grow so well?



This year was our third best year.

New Graduates—Class of 2003

After hours of classroom instruction and hours of invaluable volunteer service, the Class of 2003 have earned the coveted title of Alabama Master Gardener. Interns receiving certificates at the March meeting were:

Carole Barron,
Marylou Beck,
Gene Ermert,
Pam Gibbs,
Tommy Hutton,
Jim Ladner,
Liz Ladner,



Jim Markestad,
Mark Morgan,
Nancy Morton,

and also receiving certificates but not present were:

Becky Bentley and
Kathy Stutts.

Congratulations to our new Master Gardeners.

The Treasurer reminded them that dues are due.

Donnell House

The Limestone County Master Gardeners participated in 'A Frosty Christmas', a Christmas tree and decoration display at the Donnell House in Athens, in November. Each winter the 1845 Donnell House holds a display of Christmas decorations provided by clubs, businesses, and individuals as a fund-raiser for the historic house museum. The event is timed to provide people with ideas for their own holiday decorations.

Led by chief organizer Pamela Gibbs and creative director Jeanette Hargrove, a committee of eight additional Master Gardeners created a rustic outdoor display to greet visitors to the house. Titled 'A Frosty Morning in the Garden', the scene showed a gate in a picket fence decorated with Jackson vine. A cedar tree was decorated with strings of popcorn and pinecones with peanut butter and birdseed for the birds, as well as with ornaments made

of dried seed heads and toy birds. Rustic garden implements - a plow, buckets, hand tools, and a wooden wheelbarrow - were decorated with magnolia, cedar, and holly. A birdbath and some garden whimsies completed a vignette which was viewable 'in the round', enjoyable from any direction.

This article appeared in a recent edition of the Alabama Master Gardener's newsletter, "Garden Pathways."

by Kathryn Davis, MG 1998

Pettie Meeting

by Elaine Webster, MG 1997

The night meeting at the Pettie Aquatic Garden Supplies place of business was very educational and well attended. (We do seem to respond best to the promise of a good program, coupled with anticipation of a delicious barbeque and potluck meal.) Mrs. Lanta Pettie gave a talk on the care and maintenance of backyard ponds and the care of pond fish during winter months. Afterwards she gave a tour of the 8 ponds they have on the grounds.

If you are considering a water garden, then the Pettie Aquatic Garden is a valuable resource. We would like to thank the Petties for their hospitality

and the use of their lovely gardens. It was an excellent meeting.



The Gourd Lady

To use the term “The Gourd Lady” does not do justice to the talent of multi-media artist, Linda Morton, who presented our October program, but that is how we best remember her. We had been looking forward to her program since we saw her booth at the Fiddlers Convention in 2002. She did not disappoint us.

She brought a number of her decorative gourds with her, some rather large, and some as small as Christmas tree ornaments, which some of us bought. They were magnificently scored, stained, cut,

etc., and made into either useful or decorative objects. It was hard to choose the best, but the winner in the opinion of many was “Bob White.” Linda agreed it was one of her favorites. It was a fat squat gourd, about 14 inches in diameter, with a natural looking head at the top and even a beak (stem) in the right place. He nestled in a twig nest and had laboriously burned feathers all over his body so that he looked almost completely natural. She said she worked on him 8 hours a day for 6 months and 5 days, and even if she gets the price she is asking for him,

by Nancy Robinette, MG 1993

there would be more profit in making shoes in Mexico.

Besides the table full of gourds she brought to show us, she had a table full of tools she demonstrated, some of which were surprising. When cleaning gourds, she advises using a solution of 75% bleach and 25% water and to wear gloves. She also advises when cutting into a gourd to use a mask because gourd dust is toxic.

Beekeeper, Lionel Evans

At the February meeting, Lionel Evans presented a program about beekeeping.

He gave many pieces of information that made us aware of the importance of honeybees in our environment. He told how beekeepers remove swarms of bees from walls of houses or trees. Honeybees have become the primary source of pollination for many crops including fruits and vegetables. They are the sole

source of honey and beeswax and what they produce is being investigated as a treatment for several serious diseases. The honeybee is a social insect that lives in colonies. Domesticated colonies are kept in hives. The community consists of three structurally different forms—the queen (reproductive female), the drone (male), and the worker (nonreproductive female). Each form has a different function in the colony

by Barbara Hopson, MG 2001



*Don't Worry...
Bee Happy*

and its own special instincts and anatomy geared to the needs of the colony.

Our thanks to Mr. Evans for his time and also for the sweet honey samples and recipes.

Limestone County Master Gardeners Association

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Visit us on the web.
www.geocities.com/limestonemg

Email us any comments or suggestions.
limestonemg@yahoo.com

knowing to grow is going to grow...



Reminders

Don't forget about the upcoming Spring Plant Sale Saturday April 24th at the Farmers Market. This is our annual fundraiser and your participation is imperative for the success we desire. Contact Carl Witty to see how your efforts can best be utilized. We need plants to sell and please bring cash or a check to purchase some of the fine stock our own Master Gardeners cultivate.

The website is a great place to keep abreast of the goings-on of our Association. You can ask questions there as well as gather information on timely garden to-do's. The address is on the back page of this newsletter. Drop our Webmaster any ideas or suggestions you might have.

John O'Neill won the coveted Pink Flamingos in the raffle held at the March meeting. Congratulations John. We

knew you had your eyes on them from the start. If you have not yet paid dues, contact our Treasurer before he takes the Pink Flamingos on a coast-to-coast nationwide tour of America. We are expecting grand reports of the impressive gardens and sights he sees in his travels. We may even try to pin him down for a presentation of his journeys in a future meeting!

Keep up with your hours and let's try to get some award winners for Limestone County. Our Association has potential for greatness. Let's get out and shine. We can make a difference in our community, and it just may commence with your participation.



Take good care of your new birds, John