

FRIENDS OF *Florham*

Spring 2003

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Wroxton College — A Piece of the Past, A Part of the Future

At Fairleigh Dickinson University's Wroxton College, vibrant educational lessons are infused with the spirit of a rich historical legacy. It's all part of the unique Wroxton experience.

The University has long placed a premium value on fostering global education, and Wroxton has played a strong part in that mission for nearly four decades. In 1963, the University purchased Wroxton Abbey from Trinity College of the University of Oxford. Following significant restoration and modernization, Wroxton College opened in 1965, making Fairleigh Dickinson the first American university to operate its own campus in England.

Located in the village of Wroxton, the College lies in the heart of England between Oxford and Stratford-upon-Avon, 81 miles northwest of the very center of London. Its prime location makes the College ideally situated to provide an academic program second to none. From its closeness to Stratford — the birthplace of Shakespeare, home to the Royal Shakespeare Company and host to the Shakespeare Center



Students stroll from the entryway of Wroxton Abbey on the campus of Wroxton College.

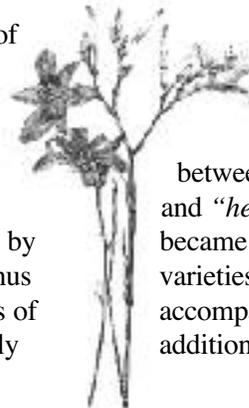
— to the ease of transportation into the heart of London and beyond: Wroxton is the gateway to a unique adventure.

Courses are taught by a highly qualified British faculty who employ the British tutorial method. As part of the challenging academic program, students regularly tour nearby cultural and political centers while being exposed to eminent visiting speakers ranging from actors from the Royal Shakespeare Company to members of Parliament.

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'Florham Lily' May Blossom Once Again

The years-long effort of the Friends of Florham to resurrect the "Florham Lily" may one day in the future restore one of America's most storied cultivars as a widely recognized floral image. The board's prolonged and wide-ranging research effort, led by board member Richard Simon, has thus far failed to find surviving specimens of the plant developed for Mrs. Twombly and registered under the name of



"Florham" in 1899 by Arthur Herrington, an internationally recognized gardening expert. Herrington introduced it as a then-brand-new cross between "*hemerocallis aurantiaca major*" and "*hemerocallis Thunbergii*." It soon became ancestor of numbers of the nation's lily varieties, and, according to the description accompanying its registration, a spectacular addition to any garden.

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FAIRLEIGH
DICKINSON
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THE LEADER IN GLOBAL EDUCATION

President's Letter

These past months, with all of the snow that has blanketed the area and specifically the College at Florham, the Friends have continued to move ahead. First of all, the grounds of Florham have been spectacularly beautiful!



*Frederick Law Olmsted
Cutleaf Maple Grove.*

Our projects this spring have been, as reported elsewhere in this newsletter, the resurfacing of the peripheral walk in the Italian Garden and the placing of a new and better plaque honoring the donors.

Another plaque was recently installed to the right of the front of the Mansion recognizing the friends and family of Kenneth W. Dougherty (husband of our board member,

Kim), in whose memory the two holly trees flanking the entrance were given. Plans for a new ramp for the disabled are in the works, as are thoughts about replacing the statues' heads.

A very fine lecture, titled "When Florham Was New, The Florham Estate and Architecture and the Gilded Age in Which It Stood," was given on March 16 by Madison's own Janet Foster, noted author and architectural historian.

Our big project, at least as far as I'm concerned, is saving and designating the "Freder-

ick Law Olmsted Cutleaf Maple Grove" which is just inside the Danforth Road entrance to the campus. To quote James Griffo, former College at Florham provost, "This species is not indigenous to America but rather was imported (by Olmsted) from Japan. It is probably the most outstanding 'forest' of Japanese cutleaf maples in the world — thanks to Frederick Law Olmsted." This grove is one of the most beautiful sights I have ever seen — especially in autumn when all the trees are bursting with color. I believe it is something so unique, to say nothing of its beauty, that it is a part of our heritage that we must protect.

With a new residence hall being built across the street from this magnificent area, we were most worried that it would be destroyed by a parking lot, but, thanks to President Adams and the efforts of those in the University administration, the new parking lot comes right to the grove's edge.

Our board member, Richard Simon, has designed and is working on a wall in three sections to protect it and set it apart from the parking lot.

But most importantly, come in the fall and actually see how fabulous the trees are themselves.

Emma Joy Dana

'Florham Lily' *continued from page 1*

But the Friends' determination to make certain that the "Florham Lily" regains the attention it once commanded has led to negotiations to recreate the flower as a decorative and commemorative lapel pin and, possibly, a tie tack.

If those negotiations proceed as the Friends hope they will, the Florham Lily's original "good yellow," as its canary yellow hue was identified in the registration data, may once more be delighting viewers' eyes just as the model from which it would be copied did in its day in the appropriately named "gilded age." Future issues of this newsletter will keep

For Your Information

The article "Shirley Carter Burden: An Appreciation" in the winter 2003 issue of the Friends of Florham Newsletter was written by James H. Fraser.

friends of the Friends apprised of the progress of this special restoration effort.

As attractive as the pin or tie tack may turn out to be if it is produced — and at the moment the if remains iffy — it will certainly not truly rival the splendid blossoms that brightened the Twomblys' herbaceous borders and parterres. A fully faithful and accurate reproduction of the live "Florham Lily" would undoubtedly severely stress any lapel or cravat to which it was pinned.

The striking blossoms that Herrington developed were as large as six inches in diameter on erect spikes that rose three to four feet in height with sepals and petals four inches long. Its botanical grandeur was, in short, well suited to the majestic scale of the estate it graced so becomingly in its heyday.

The Italian Garden

On a beautiful Sunday in May 1998, the Friends of Florham, along with several hundred honored guests, celebrated the completion of the first phase of the restoration of the Italian Garden — the restoration of the Pergola at the far end of the garden and the parterre in the center. The formal dedication began with the Rev. Monsignor Vincent Puma opening the ceremony in both English and Italian and the Rev. Lauren Ackland of the Grace Episcopal Church, giving the benediction. Both are from Madison, N.J.

The day was a tribute to the hundreds of workmen, mostly Italian, who were brought to this country by Hamilton Twombly to construct the estate's buildings and the grounds and to plant the gardens. The Italian Garden was designed by Alfred Parsons and was subsequently brought to near perfection by the family's long-time garden and internationally recognized gardening expert, Arthur Herrington.

Our board member, Frances Mantone, was a granddaughter of one of these workmen, Anthony Pico. She was primarily responsible for bringing together, not only her own family and friends, but the many other workers' descendants whose families settled in the surrounding area, and who helped make this restoration possible. Mantone spoke feelingly about the "hard-working people, diligent and conscientious, who came to America for a better life — with very little except their deep commitment to their families and their love of the earth."

We were thrilled to have with us as our special guests the sister and other relatives of Dr. and Mrs. Peter Sammartino, the founders of Fairleigh Dickinson University; a number of alumni, former faculty members and friends, as well as many third-generation descendants of the original workers who helped create Florham.

Of particular joy to us was the fact that we were able to use some of the original plantings of peonies, columbine and irises in our recreated parterre. Board members Ann Granbery, a prominent local landscape architect, and Richard Simon were determined to recreate this beautiful garden that had been considered "one of the finest gardens in the country."



The restored Italian Gardens at the College at Florham.

Before the heavy snows of this winter, the peripheral walk surrounding the garden was completed. The snow, incidentally, helped to pack down and settle the very fine gravel which was used.

A new and better plaque with the names of the donors, to whom we are forever grateful, also has been placed at the end of the garden in the pergola. A few things are still needed to complete the restoration — replacing the heads and

The Italian Gardens (below) prior to their recent renovation.



Post-restoration Italian Gardens (above).

the cleaning of the two statues of classical figures; fixing the surrounding walls, where there are several missing pieces; and replacing a ramp for the disabled with a more architecturally appropriate structure.

In conclusion, it has been five years since that celebration, but we want all who were involved to know that we continue to be tremendously grateful to those who so generously contributed to our efforts to restore this beautiful Italian Garden. Do come and see it in the spring!

Dupak Appointed Board Member



Newly appointed
Friends of Florham
Board Member
Dawn Dupak

Friends of Florham announces the nomination of Dawn Dupak as a new board member. She has served the local community in many capacities since moving to Chatham, N.J., in 1982. A sustaining member of the Junior League of Morristown, N.J., Dupak has held positions in several organizations, including Stanley Congregational Church, The Arts Council of the Morris Area, the Municipal Alliance of the Chathams and the Marionette Players. She has served as co-chair of the Friends of Florham Gala Ball since 1999 and will continue to aid the Gala Committee in this annual venture.

A native of Canada, Dupak holds a BA in fine arts from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and is a graduate of the Robert Simpson Company Interior Design Training Program in Toronto. She also has been responsible for various leadership-training seminars for The Association of Junior Leagues International. Dupak is presently a wardrobe consultant for Doncaster, a division of the Tanner Companies.

She is married to Peter Dupak and has two daughters, Erin and Kim. Her other interests include downhill skiing, golf, bridge and gourmet cooking.

Wroxton College *continued from page 1*

The Abbey, a 17th-century Jacobean mansion, is the centerpiece of the College. It has been home to earls, lords and barons and a guest house to princes, presidents, poets — and now students.

Surrounded by 56 acres of lakes, lawns and woodlands, the Abbey actually dates back to 1215, when it was an Augustinian priory. Destroyed by the soldiers of Henry VIII, it was rebuilt between 1600 and 1618 by Sir William Pope. This honey-colored mansion has been home to historical figures — Francis North, the first Baron Guilford and Lord Chancellor to Charles II, and Frederick, Lord North, prime minister to George III between 1770 and 1782. The Abbey's impressive guest log includes royalty from Charles I, George IV and William IV to statesmen like Theodore Roosevelt and Harold Wilson. Other distinguished visitors have included Horace Walpole, Celia Fiennes and Henry James, to whom Wroxton was a part of the essence of England:

“Everything that in the material line can render life noble and charming has been gathered into it with a profusion which makes the whole place a monument of past opportunity.”

As FDU marks the 40th anniversary of its owning Wroxton College, it continues to view Wroxton as a cornerstone of its global education offerings. Not only do students gain vital international perspectives, but they receive high-quality, personalized teaching and experi-

ence immersion into another way of life.

Officially declared a historical landmark by the British government, Wroxton Abbey provides students a mix of contemporary focus and traditional style and an unparalleled learning environment. Continuity and change have always gone hand in hand at Wroxton. Indeed, one of the most significant measurements of an institution's success is its ability to adapt to current times while simultaneously preserving its heritage. Hence, toward the end of the 1990s, a major plan of renovation and refurbishment was drawn up and implemented.

After almost two years of intense labor, extensive renovations to the Wroxton Abbey's study-bedrooms were completed. While remaining true to the building's history, a fully modern facility was created. Adjacent to the Abbey on the grounds, the Carriage House, which houses the College's dining facilities, a pub (Buttery) and a vast lecture hall, has very recently undergone the same intensive work, and there are plans to further develop additional residential accommodations and classroom facilities.

There also are developments on the College grounds resulting from the rediscovery of a natural spring, giving rise to the suggestion of perhaps bottling and selling Wroxton water!

At Wroxton, historical tradition remains both a top priority and an integral part of the overall educational experience. As the University looks ahead with optimism to a new era of schooling world citizens, it pledges to continue to cherish the greatness of the past while preparing students to compete and excel in the uncertainties of the future.

'When Florham Was New'

At one point in "When Florham Was New," her illustrated talk to a Friends of Florham audience on March 16 in Fairleigh Dickinson's Lenfell Hall, the Mansion, Janet Foster called Florham a typical Gilded Age combination of reverence for 18th-century architectural precedents and a new and, in its late 19th-century day, modern attitude toward the past.



Janet Foster

"The American estate, whether in Newport, Morristown or New York, strived to use historic furnishings and architectural elements to give a sense of old money and timeless good taste," Foster noted. "But these historical elements — Renaissance fireplaces, Rococo paneling and

Baroque garden grottos," she pointed out, "were used in the context of a very modern sensibility" epitomizing a fashionable modern taste. That taste, then current, glorified the newly made and reflected the late Victorian ambivalence toward the avant garde's new and growing — but not by any means widely recognized — interest in old things having value in the marketplace.

Foster's linkage of some of the impulses of the very rich, like the Twomblys, with the ordinary

turn-of-the-century Americans who were "enthusiastically embracing" a burgeoning consumer culture was only one of her many perceptions that characterized her deftly mobile movements between architectural and social history.

"When Florham Was New" was the 14th presentation in the Friends' series of lectures. The list of speakers who preceded her has been a thoroughly distinguished one. It includes, among others, John T. Cunningham, Richard Guy Wilson, Maureen Ogden, Samuel White, Frank Sanchis, Mac Griswold, Mark Hewitt and John Foreman.

Like Foster, a highly regarded architectural historian, historic preservation consultant, author and academic, these earlier participants were chosen by the Friends Lecture Committee. The speakers were selected not only because of their prominence as authorities on the subjects on which they spoke, but also because, the life's work of each of them attests to their staunch defense of the preservationist values to which the Friends of Florham have always been dedicated.



Janet Foster, left, discusses her lecture with attendees Violetta DuPont, center, and Maureen McGuire.

Plan to Celebrate at Friends' 6th Annual Gala

This year's "Evening at Florham" is planned for Saturday, May 10, at the Mansion, College at Florham. The Gala Committee is headed by Honorary Chair Thelma Dear. She is assisted by Barbara Keefauver, Dawn Dupak and Phyllis Conway.

This promises to be an evening for all the senses — cocktails on the terrace; an excellent menu from the Twombly's chef, Joseph Donan; dancing to the music of the John Johnson Trio; and historical tours by board members Walter Savage and Richard Simon.

Plan to join the Friends at 7 p.m. on May 10 for a wonderful evening. Tickets are \$150 per person or \$250 for patrons. The proceeds will support the ongoing renovations for the Mansion. Please reserve early, seating is limited.



Friends of Florham volunteers coordinate seating for this year's spring Gala during a morning meeting. They are, standing, from left, Kay Lyall, Suzy Moran, Carol Kurtz and Cathy Atenzio and, sitting, Barbara Keefauver.



Become a Friend

Join the Friends of Florham. Participate directly in our efforts to preserve the architectural history of Florham, and support our informative program series. Your support will make a difference.

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