

MARSHALLVILLE AND MACON COUNTY MULTIPLE RESOURCE NOMINATION
ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

No. 7

Ref #880044118

IDENTIFICATION

Property Name Massee Lane/Camellia Gardens Historic Name Strother's Farm
Street Address Route 3 City Fort Valley MC County Peach
Present Owner American Camellia Society Street Address Route 3, P.O. Box 1217
City Fort Valley State Georgia ZIP Code 31030
Original Owner Needham Massee Acreage 8 1/2
Marshallville, Ga.
U.S.G.S. Quadrant 1:24000 U.T.M. Reference Z.17 E.225050 N.3598140
Tax Map Reference Part of 125 Acres, Land Lots 12 & 13, 8th Land District, Peach County

Architectural Description and Present Condition: The American Camellia Society headquarters consists of two major formal gardens, in front and behind the Williamsburg style headquarters building. Brick walks are utilized throughout the gardens which feature, in addition to camellias, daffodils, day lilies, magnolias, gardenias, Confederate jasmines, tea olives, and roses. Millstones and mile posts are also used, often to define walks. Excellent condition.

HISTORY

Current Use Botanical Garden, Museum Historic Use Farm
Construction Date 1936 Architect/Builder Dave Strother Date of Alterations 1966, 1972

Historical Narrative: This property was originally part of Needham Massee's plantation, settled in 1827. Dave Strother acquired a portion of that farm in the early 1900's and began growing peaches. A 1936 storm destroyed his farm, and instead of replanting peaches he began designing the formal camellia gardens. This was a period of great interest in horticulture in Marshallville, as evidenced by J.D. Wade's planting of crepe myrtles along Hwy. 49. Marshallville, with Strother and Wade in the foreground, hosted several large camellia shows in the 1940's and 50's. In 1966, Strother donated his farm and a considerable
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SIGNIFICANCE

Areas of Significance Landscape Architecture **Statement of Significance:** The formal gardens at Massee Lane are important as one of the highest expressions of Marshallville's interest in landscape architecture. Camellias were brought to the community around 1850 from South Carolina and can still be found in small formal gardens near many of the houses. Although Massee Lane's period of significance is less than 50 years old, it should nonetheless be included in the National Register because of its great artistic value and its representation of a long-time area of interest to the community.

SOURCES

Prepared by Milton H. Brown Street Address Rt. 3, P.O. Box 1217
City Fort Valley State Georgia Date 8/31/79
Representation in Other Surveys None

Sources of Information:

Pyron, Joe. "History of Massee Lane." The American Camellia Yearbook, 1973. Fort Valley, GA: The American Camellia Society. 1973.

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SEP 16 1980

NOV 25 1980

Photographer James R. Lockhart Direction Photographer Facing Southwest

Date March 1980 Negatives on File Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

Photograph Number 38 of 41.

SITE PLAN--INCLUDE NORTH ARROW

CONTINUATION

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

amount of cash for a headquarters building to the American Camellia Society. It has been used by the Society since that time.

SOURCES

Smith, Gerald J. The Agrarian Thought of John Donald Wade. Thesis. West Georgia College, Carrollton, GA. 1971.