KENT-DELORD HOUSE MUSEUM GARDENS Betsey Delord, ca. 1864



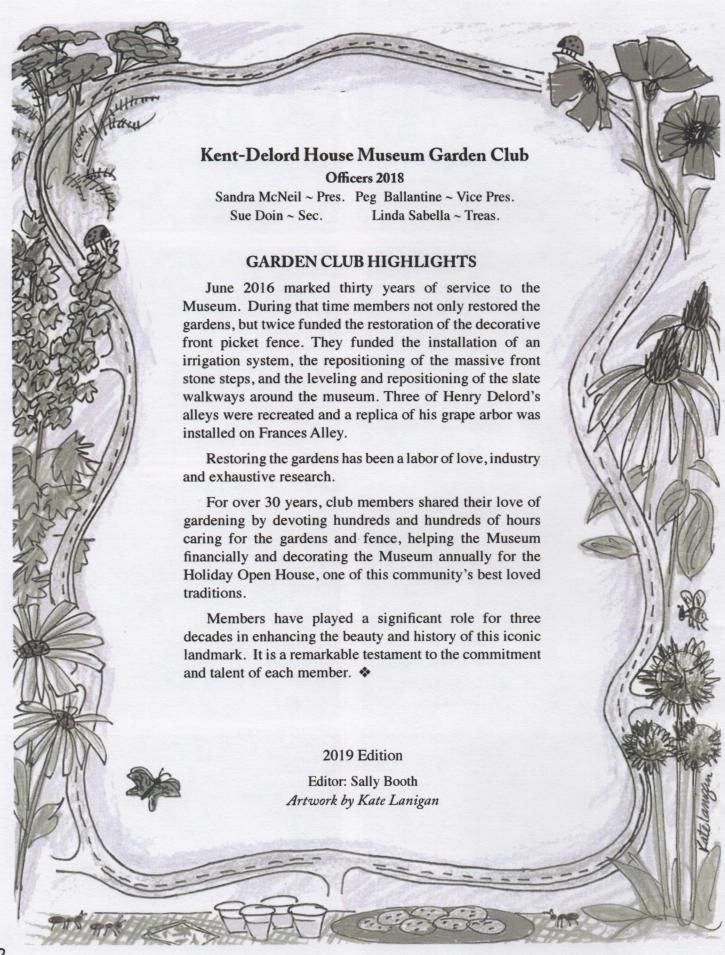












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The Renowned Gardens

The garden in front of the house was well-known in the neighborhood and community through the 19th century and still is to this day, but what can be seen in those symmetrical flower beds enclosed by the intricate picket fence is only part of the story.

The vegetable gardens and outbuildings described in Henry's day book tell us that this property was a working farm for the first quarter of the 19th century. His notes describe the size and location of the vegetable gardens and walkways stretching north from the solid board fence near the sidewalk to the well and a line of fruit trees in back

Photographs show how that area changed sometime after Henry's death (1825) when a second geometric flower garden was installed in the backyard area near the kitchen. Figs. 39-42 on page 11 reveal some outdoor furnishings: a bench, the wrought iron-glass aquarium and clothes lines in the midst of midsummer blooms.

Just the fact that photographs were taken, not of people, but of flowers, points to the significance the gardens played in the lives of the surviving generations of the Delord women. Other images underscore this importance:

- an indoor shot of a large display of house plants overflowing from the solarium into the west parlor (page 5, fig.3)
- some of those indoor plants on display in the front garden (page 9, fig.30)
- photograph below of Fanny in front of the portico surrounded by foliage.

Magnified details of work-yard items in the photographs on pages 10 & 12 (a broom, the wood or coal bin, the outdoor shelf, a bench, the long wrought iron bar, etc) provide a subplot of daily chores seldom mentioned in museum documents. *





1987

GARDEN CLUB TIME-LINE 1986 - 2016

1986	Held first meeting of Garden Club.
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Rylaws adopted

1707	Dylans adopted.
	Two Garden Club members attend Historic Landscape
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	Destauration Community Townstown NIV

Restoration Symposium, Tarrytown, NY.

Research for Historic Landscape Report begins.

1988 Two L-shaped flower beds planted both sides front walk: raised herb bed on the north side; Victorian garden on east side and roses on west side near kitchen.

1989 Fund raising to restore intricate front fence.

1993 Restored fence installed.

1995 Original design of front garden discovered.

1996 Original formal geometric design laid out and planted.

1997 Heirloom roses added to east garden.

Automatic irrigation system installed.

Repositioning and alignment of massive stone steps.

1998 Planted climbing roses on each side of portico, moss roses in front beds, heirloom iris in dining room alcove.

Historic Landscape Report completed. See page 19. 2000

2001 Master Plan presented by Lucinda Brockway of Past Designs, an award-winning historic preservation and garden design firm.

2002 Began implementation of Master Plan.

2003 * East garden simplified with ferns, phlox and roses. Clematis jackmanii substituted for climbing rose due to lack of depth of soil needed for climbing rose.

* Two, white pyramid-shaped tuteurs added to front gardens for

2004 Diorama display built to show development of the gardens - 1812 through 1913.

Front gardens edged in brick.

2005 * Herb garden relocated to west side, near kitchen.

* Heirloom lilacs planted on west side of front gardens.

★ Three of Henry Delord's Alleys recreated on west lawn.

* Grape arbor replica installed.

2013 Slate walkways brought up to grade and leveled.

2016 30th Anniversary of the Garden Club.

* completed Master Plan items



GROUNDS & GARDENS 1812 - 1986

How the landscape evolved over 175 years from three acres of undeveloped land to the large formal vegetable gardens with walkways, the symmetrical geometric flower garden in front, a mid-century second formal garden planted in the back yard and finally to the 20th century expanse of lawns.

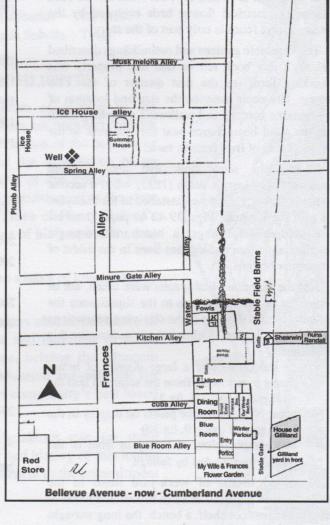
Two years after the purchase of the simple one-and-one-half story structure along with three acres of land in August of 1810, Henry Delord "laid out the land to the west of his house in formal gardens with walkways, with the gardens of his native France in mind. He called the southern and western part of it his "bowery." A small summer house stood toward the north end, and an ice house and well were located towards its western edge. Each of the paths had a name. The main north-south lane was "Frances Alley;" he called others "Muskmelon Alley," "Minure Gate Alley" and "Ice House Alley." "Blue Room Alley" was named because a door from the blue room or west room of the house opened onto it.

"He planted every vegetable and herb that could possibly survive in a northern climate, including interesting items like blue potatoes and vegetable oysters, and he experimented with many that would not, such as coffee beans and mangoes. . . He obviously put his garden high on his list of priorities and although he employed others to do much of the work, he minutely supervised the entire operation."

Allan S. Everest's, *Henry Delord and His Family*, George Little Press Inc. Burlington, Vt, 1979.

Henry's vegetable gardens provided food and income during his lifetime. Some of the vegetable plots fell into disuse after Henry's death in 1825, but the walkways endured until the 1920s when the area was harrowed and filled for ease of maintenance. The geometric formal garden at the front of the house named in Henry's 1820 day-book as My wife and Frances' Flower Garden, survived for nearly 160 years.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century a second formal geometric garden was planted on the west side of the property, inspired by the gardens at Versailles, visited by Frances Delord and Henry Livingston Webb on their wedding trip in 1833.



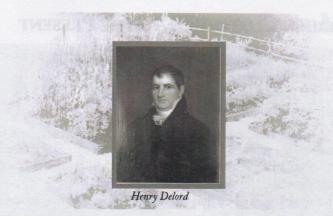
Hot Bed Alley



1. Photo of the formal front garden published in a 1914 booklet for "The Centenary of the Battle of Plattsburgh."



2. Mirror-imaged geometric gardens on either side of the front walk laid out in 1995.



Henry's Gardens

The gardens at 17 Cumberland Avenue laid out in 1812, were always high on Henry's list of priorities. After his death in 1825, it was the capable and strong-minded women of his







Frances Delord Webb Hall

Betsey Ketchum Delord

Frances Delord Webb

family who carried on the tradition of the gardens, in addition to their frequent roles as hostesses and their dedication to good works and reform movements. Their interest in flowers and plants is evident in photographs and in their letters and journals. They mention the search for seeds, the gifts of plants they gave and received and the location of their favorite plants.

Fanny (Frances Delord Webb Hall), granddaughter of Henry and Betsey Delord and daughter of Frances Henrietta Delord and Henry L. Webb, was the last of the Delords. She lived in the house as a child from 1834 to 1838, returning in 1863 to spend the rest of her life there.

Her faithful servant, Catherine Dowling, had been with Fanny since her marriage to Frank Hall in 1856 and was at



her bedside when she died in 1913. Catherine stayed on to care for the house assisted by Maggie Shanks. In spite of the devoted attention of these two elderly ladies, the exterior of the house gradually began to deteriorate. The surviving gardens were described in a 1917 issue

of The Plattsburgh Daily Republican, as a perfect riot of bloom and fragrance.

Fanny's friend and neighbor, Jeannette Brookings Tuttle, understood the significance of those historic gardens and buildings and began a campaign to raise a maintenance fund. In 1924, as a result of her persistent efforts, philanthropist William Miner was persuaded to buy the house and property to preserve this important historic landmark. Mr. Miner created a Board of Trustees, provided a trust fund, made extensive repairs and renovations to the house and grounds demolishing some of the outbuildings including the famous Red Store. A 1979 exploratory archaeology survey for the Historic House Report revealed that the west lawn area of the Museum property was "harrowed and filled during the early twentieth century."

Remains of some of the flower beds existed into the 1930s and were admired and well known in the community. As late as 1960 a visitor noted the front garden remained in the same form as designed in 1814 by Henry's friend, Army Engineer and mapmaker, Lieutenant de Russey.

By the time of the inflationary 1970s, income from Mr. Miner's endowment was no longer sufficient to maintain the building and in 1975 the Trustees reorganized the entire operation, embarking

> on a variety of money making projects and expanding services offered by the museum. With maintenance of the building and its contents as a costly but necessary priority, little attention was paid to the gardens. Not surprisingly, except for a few shrubs, a day lily border and one small flower bed, the gardens had disappeared.

> It was at this point in 1986 that a group of interested citizens formed a garden club to re-establish the historical horticulture of the 100-year period when the Delord family occupied the house. �



3. Plants from the Solarium moved to front garden in the summer.



5. In 1984, after the elaborate fence had been removed to prevent further deterioration, the Virginia Creeper vine, a few shrubs, a small flower bed and the day lily border were all that remained of the famous garden in front of the Kent-Delord House Museum.

THE KENT-DELORD HOUSE MUSEUM GARDEN CLUB 1986 TO THE PRESENT



Since 1928 when the Kent-Delord House was first opened as a museum, maintenance of the building and its contents have always been a priority. By 1980, despite the best efforts of dedicated staff and trustees, little remained of the gardens and the decorative fence had been put in storage to prevent further deterioration.

Life inside the museum always seemed to be humming with visitors, school events, historical exhibits, care of artifacts, craft demonstrations, Christmas parties, and the all-important membership and fund raising drives. Outside, all was quiet except for occasional school events and lawn maintenance.

"What this Museum really needs is a garden club"

This entreaty was heard at every meeting until finally in June of 1986, more than two dozen people, out of curiosity and genuine interest, answered the call. This group of dedicated volunteers quickly formed committees and planted flowers in the existing flowers beds.

Bylaws adopted that first year stated the mission: "the purpose of this club is to facilitate restoration of the historical horticulture consistent with the purpose stated in the trust and bylaws of the Kent-Delord House Corporation."

In 1987, two Garden Club members attended the Historic Landscape Restoration Symposium at Sleepy Hollow, NY, where they learned two fundamental requirements to fulfill the Club's mission: prepare an historic landscape report and hire a professional historic landscape architect to develop a Master Plan.

Club members agreed that restoring the intricate picket fence that had enclosed the front garden for over 100 years was the first priority. A renowned feature of the house and garden, the fence restoration became the Club's first major fund raising project. Repaired and restored to its original condition, the fence was reinstalled in 1993.

The design of the front garden remained a mystery until 1995, when a photograph was discovered on the cover of a booklet published in 1914, The Centenary of the Battle of Plattsburgh, showing the formal geometric symmetry of the garden in front of the house. The caption reads: "garden in front of the Kent-Delord

House . . . this garden was laid out in 1812 by Major de Russey U.S.A. and is still maintained in its original form."

In 1996, a similar pattern was recreated and planted with heirloom/or similar varieties as it remains today. (See fig. 2 page 4)

Meanwhile, the Historic Landscape Report Committee was assembling information from the museum's archival collection of letters, diaries, historical records and photographs. When that was done, the Club looked for an historic landscape professional and were fortunate to find an award-winning historic landscape specialist, Lucinda Brockway of Past Designs in Kennebunkport Maine, who prepared and delivered the master plan in 2001.

Cultivation of the gardens is done weekly on a rotating schedule by two members for two hours each. Once a month an additional all-member work day is scheduled to keep the gardens looking their best.

The Club raises funds for the gardens with their very popular Secret Gardens Tour and in the spring, weather permitting, hold a plant swap and sale. Members plan field trips in the summer to other gardens and nurseries and help to decorate the Museum for the holidays. The Club meets once a month except during the winter and the Annual Meeting is usually held in January.



2018 Holiday Open House



7. Garden Club summer field trip to a beautiful garden on Oseetah Lake in the Adirondacks.

GARDEN CLUB MASTER PLAN PROJECTS



phlox and clematis.



8. East garden simplified with ferns, 9. White pyramid-shaped tuteurs added phlox and clematis. to front garden for height.



10. Herbs removed from this location and replanted on the west side of kitchen.



11. Three heirloom lilacs planted on west side of front gardens.



12. Three of Henry Delord's Alleys or pathways recreated to show the layout and scale of the original gardens.



13. Grape arbor replica installed on Frances Alley.

GARDEN CLUB SPECIAL PROJECTS



14. Automatic irrigation system installed.



16. Slate walkways brought up to grade and leveled.



15. Massive front steps repositioned for safety and appearance.



17. Ribbon cutting for newly restored elaborate picket fence.



18. Three-dimensional diorama of the evolution of the gardens and landscape over a period of 100 years.

Now AND THEN



19. West lawn. Pathways and raised beds were removed in the 20s.



21. Garden near bay window pending Master Plan recommendations.



23 & 24. West side in spring. Arrow in both photos points to the old white lilac, said to have been planted by Henry Delord.



25. Southeast view in early summer.



20. Raised flower beds of a formal garden, inspired by the French gardens at Versailles.



22. Bay window with ferns and climbing rose.





26. A simple three board fence to confine livestock adjoined the intricate picket fence until the 1920s.

THE BACKYARD FORMAL GARDEN



39. Early spring - raised beds of west garden & laundry yard.



41. West formal garden in full bloom, showing laundry yard near kitchen with clothes lines & post.



43. One horse chaise. KDH Museum 1924 souvenir booklet.



44. View from 2nd floor at 1 Kent Lane. Grape arbor, barn, sheds and Red Store.



40. Artifact handle, clothes lines and bench can just be barely seen with magnifier in the midst of the profusion of blooms.



42. Wrought iron and glass artifact in west formal garden.
Gordon Chappell, Director of Landscape and Facilities
Services at Colonial Williamsburg was contacted in 2005 by
a Garden Club member and this photo emailed to him. He
believed it dates from the 1870s, 1880s or 1890s and was a
Victorian garden aquarium.



45. The old well. 1924 souvenir booklet.



46. Existing stonework of old well.

See � on map on page 4.

19TH CENTURY OUT-BUILDINGS AND FENCES

From 1812 until the 1920s, most of the Delord property was fenced with three, five or solid board fences to separate gardens, animal enclosures, barnyard and driveway in contrast to today's expanse of lawns surrounding the house and barn. Out-buildings included the Red Store and several smaller buildings, i.e. the Summer House, Ice House, small sheds for garden tools or livestock and Henry Delord's rental buildings.





Kitchen Ailey

Kitchen Ailey

Kitchen Ailey

Kitchen Ailey

Solution

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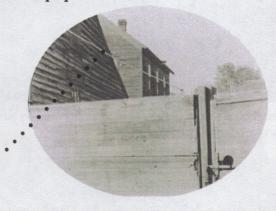
51. Section of Henry Delord's Day-book map. Rental properties shaded.

Evidence that, at one time, there were two buildings behind the barn is shown these two photographs.

47. Solid board fence and gate with unidentified two-story building directly behind barn.

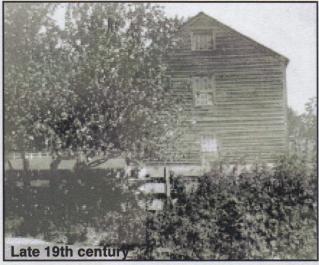
48. The famous Red Store behind the same but significantly deteriorated gate.

49. The long wrought-iron bar used to support the solid board fence still exists today and is attached to the upper south-east corner of the barn.





50. Jeannette B. Tuttle, World War I veterans (Patrick Lynch, Cornelius Collins, Pablo Fuentes), Helen Smith, and Catherine Dowling in front of solid board fence & Red Store.



51. The Red Store, behind a three board fence, an extension of the solid board fence.

Mr. Miner made extensive repairs and renovations to the house and grounds in the 1920s, including demolishing some of the out-buildings and the famous Red Store.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

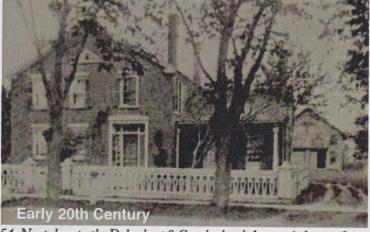


52. Plattsburgh, New York 1899 Bird's Eye View

Publisher: L.R. Burleigh



53. Horse-Chestnut tree in bloom and Virginia Creeper (said to have been planted by Judge Delord) covering the portico.



54. Next door to the Delords at 9 Cumberland Avenue is home of the young poet, Lucretia Davidson,. This building and the carriage barn behind it have been remodeled and still exist.



55. Cumberland Avenue (unpaved) leading to the Samuel Champlain Monument, erected in 1909.



56. Cumberland Avenue (unpaved) with entrance (?) to Samuel Champlain Monument. Note: ornamental street lights installed by the City of Plattsburgh ca 1919.

NORTH SIDE



33. Rear entrance, with broom, rake and coal or wood bin.



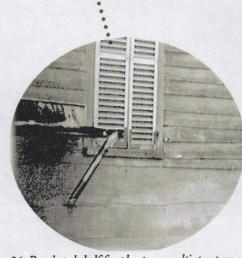
34. Handicap accessible rear entrance.



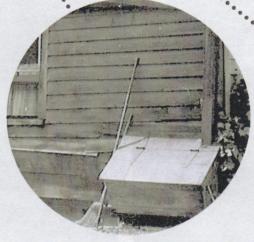
2001

35. Rear entrance and smoke/beehive oven.

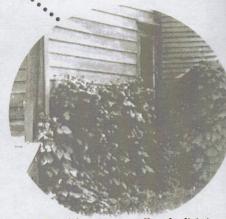
YARD WORK ITEMS & PLANTS NEAR NORTH ENTRANCE



36. Bracketed shelf for plants or multi-purpose garden work.



37. Broom, dust pan, rake and bin for wood or coal..



38. Vine (?) covering wall and adjoining brick work on smoke/beehive oven.

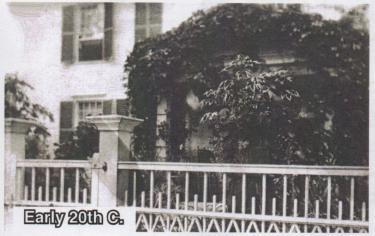
STREET SIDE



27. Catherine Dowling, center, and two women.



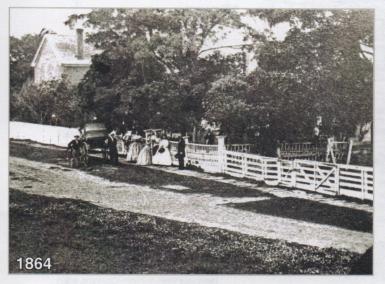
28. Fire escape for caretaker's 2nd floor apartment.



29. Potted plants from the solarium placed on posts in the front garden.



30. Fanny Delord Webb Hall, standing near portico behind lush foliage.



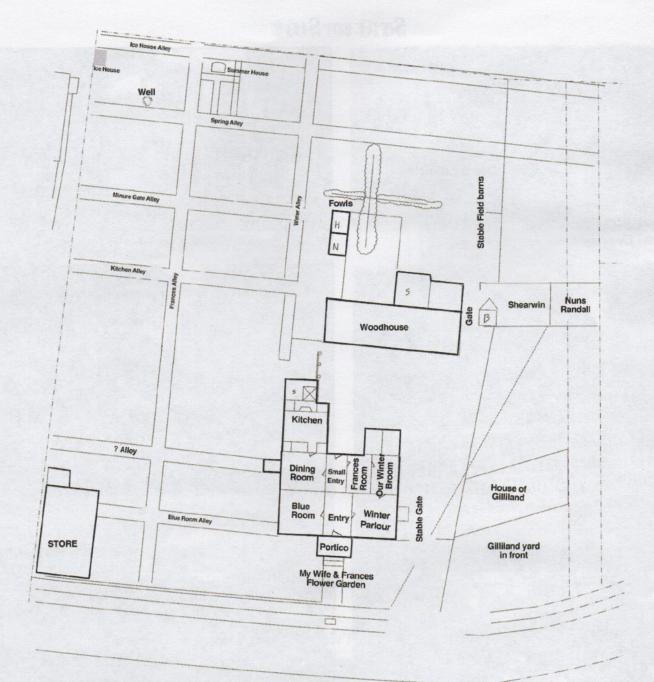
1864

31. Left: Stereograph of carriage and several people, marked May 1864 on back.

32. Right: photograph of Elizabeth Swetland* at the gate, also marked 1864 and probably taken the same day as the stereograph.

William Swetland (Betsey Delord's second husband) died on January 1 1864 so it is presumed that the family waited until spring to gather for the internment. In a close-up examination of the stereograph on the left, Elizabeth Swetland,* stands behind the fence in the same pose and clothing as the photo on the right.

^{*} Formerly Betsey Delord



Henry Delord's Day Book Includes references to vegetables, but few flowers, trees and shrubs

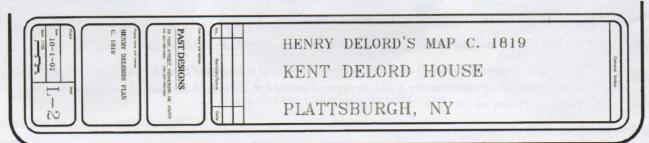
Note: Plan was to scale to conform to site dimensions

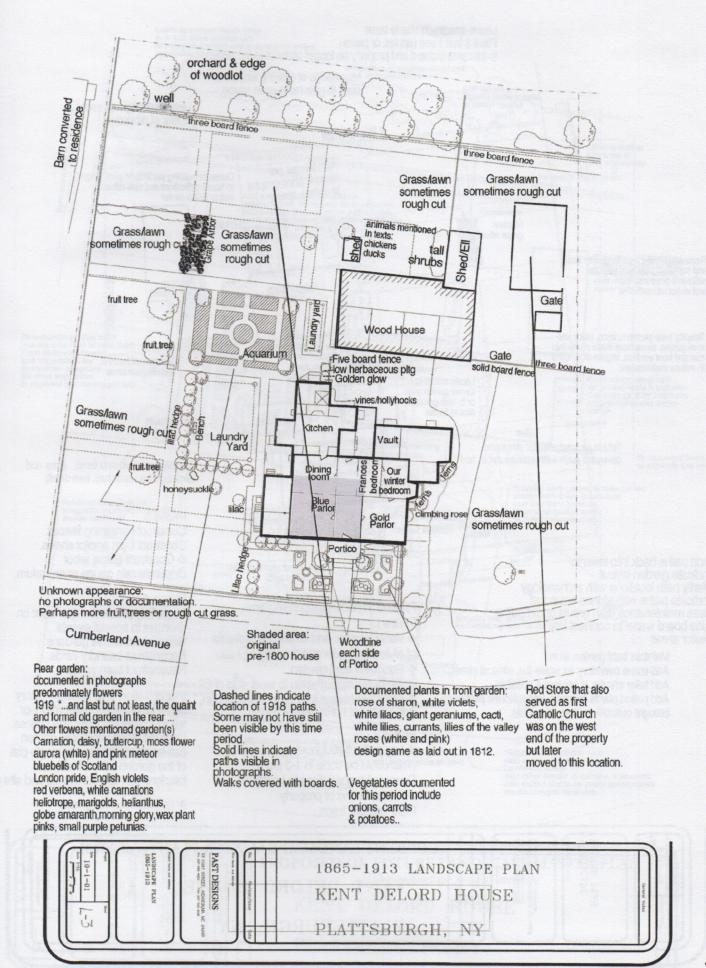
Woodshed and out building were drawn too close to house

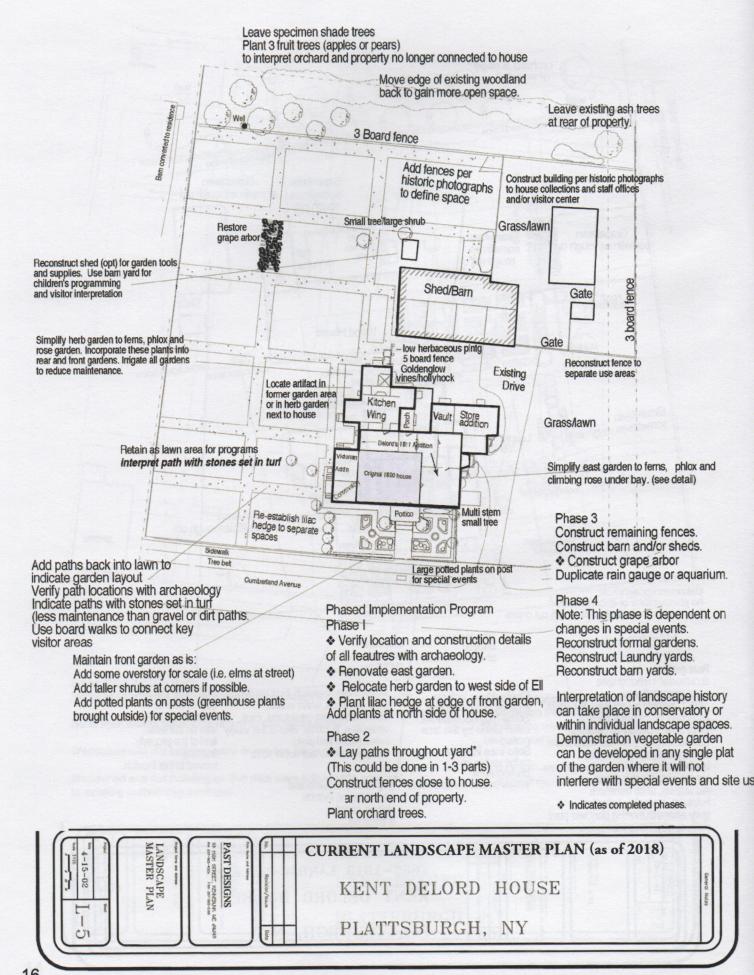
Woodshed and out building on this plan were adjusted to conform to existing outbuilding locations

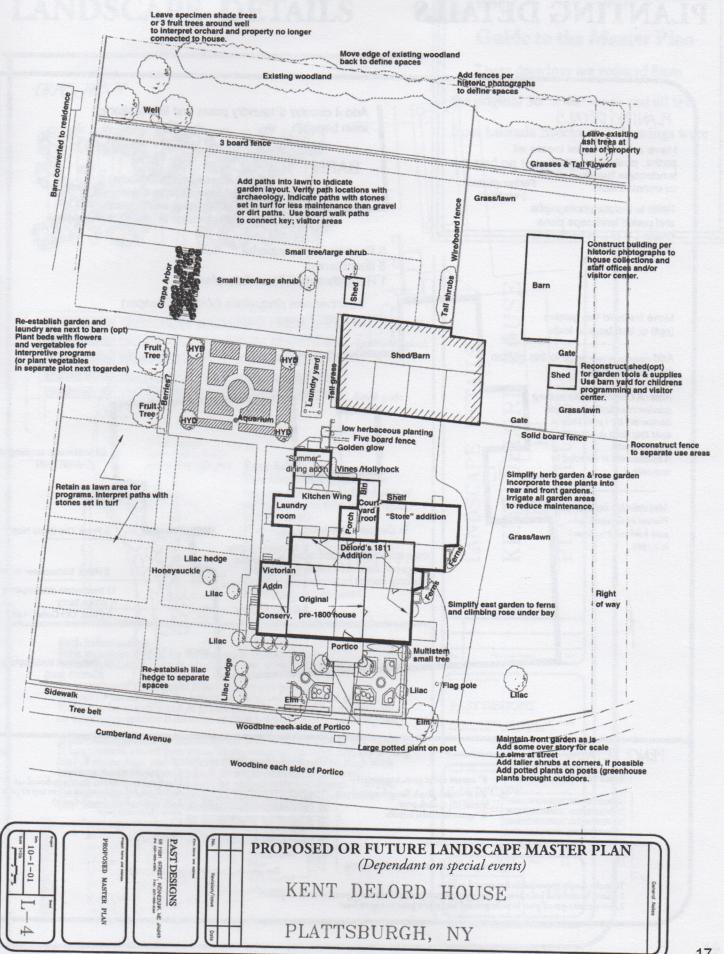
All othe information is based on Delord C. 1819 plan ? indicates where Henry Delord's text was not legible.

Editor's note: text resized for legibility over orginal map lines from **Past Designs**.

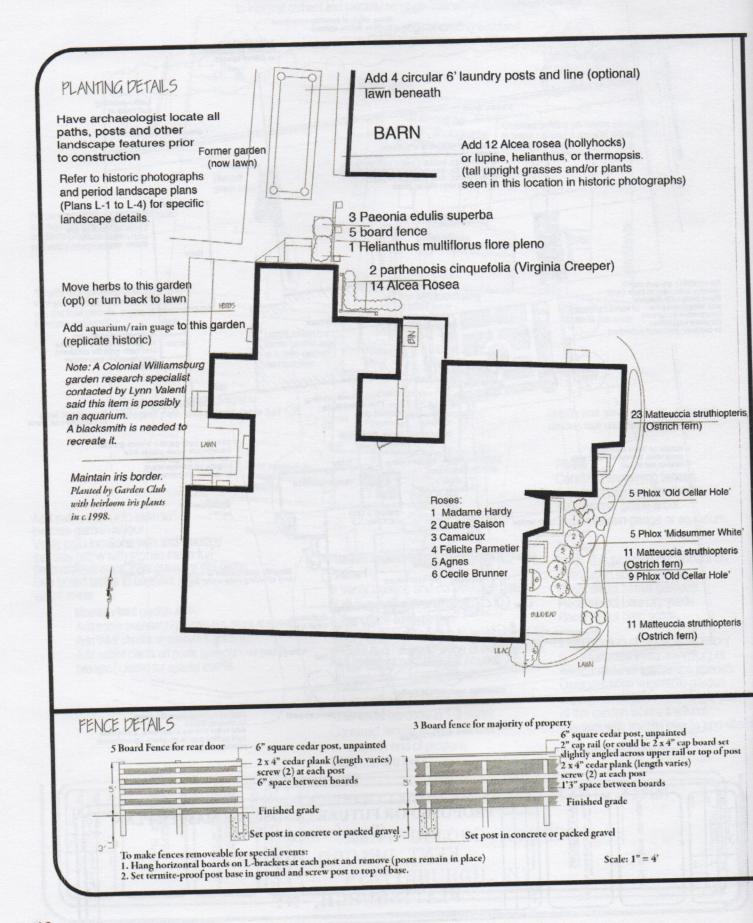






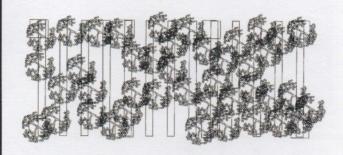


PLANTING DETAILS



LANDSCAPE DETAILS

GRAPE ARBOR



6 x 6" Cedar post 2 x 4" Cedar plank 1"3" spacing Finish grade SCALE: |"-4" 6" x 6" header Screw with L-bracket

to top of upright post FINISH GRADE 8'6" SCALE: |"=4"

Rose Arbor

Rose arbor in east garden can be variation of fence and arbor design or can be developed from iron uprights and wire lattice.

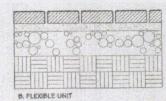
Place posts 1' minimum from side of house.

Optional: hinge bottom of wooden posts and attach to house with hook and eye so that vine can be lowered toward ground for maintenance on house.

Path information
Path locations should be verified with archaeologist
before installation. Verify exact location, width and surface materials.

Restoration of these paths is an interpretive tool for visitors to understand the layout and scale of the Delord garden. Paths can be constructed of gravel (edged with steel for maintenance) or bluestone, granite fieldstone or chip n seal (gravel topped asphalt)

If bluestone, granite or fieldstone are used, prepare base as per illustration. If large stones are set into grass/loam, cut away existing sod, lay setting bed of stone dust, and level large (2-3' minimum) stones flush with existing grade. Bring loam back to edges of stone and reseed. Stones set in loam/grass should be spaced with maximum 2" joints. Center of each stone should be set 26" from center of next stone (26" is average stride distance between steps)



- < Unit pavers
- < Setting bed < Aggrigate
- subgrade

< Prepared

Guide to the Master Plan

These drawings are reduced from the original 36" x 48" maps and all text from Lucinda Brockway's drawings were retyped on these pages.

Revision/Issue

PAST DESIGNS 55 HIGH STREET, KENNEBUNK ME 04045

LANDSCAPE DETAILS

