

The value of historic tree planting

by LORETTA F. TESSMER

Recently, James May, the seed collection coordinator and operations director for America's Historic Forests, was in Chattanooga for an Arbor Day Historic Tree Grove Planting. This planting took place at the beautiful Splanger Farm, not long hence sold to the city of Chattanooga by a local dentist (the one who gave me my only filling). That Monday in mid-November [1990] found the farm's fall foliage quite lovely.

Of the trees which were planted for the Arbor Day ceremony, there was not a magnolia in the bunch. There were, however, some excellent planting choices which had historical meaning as did the silver maple offspring (*Acer saccharinum*). This seedling planted was traceable to the "roots" of author Alex Haley; the parent tree shades his grandparents' home in Henning, Tennessee.

Below, I list several magnolias which are listed with America's Historic Forests. These magnolias are either related to early American history or are State Champion Trees. Perhaps you would like to nominate a magnolia, or other tree, which fits one of these two categories, to be included in this worthwhile program. Make sure that seed quantities from the tree can be easily collected by volunteers.

Southern Magnolias listed by the Classic Tree Nursery:

Juliette Gordon Low—Georgia
Montpelier—Virginia
National Champion—Mississippi
Henry Clay—Mississippi
Historic—Mississippi
Sturdivant Hall—Alabama
Mabry-Jones—Alabama
Patrick Henry—Virginia
Blandford Church—Virginia
Jay Gould—New York
Vanderbilt—Tennessee
Black House—Tennessee
Magnolia Plantation—South Carolina
Cahawba—Alabama
Andersonville—Georgia
Archibald Rutledge—South Carolina
Betsy Ross—Pennsylvania
Old Washington—Arkansas
Lady Bird Johnson—Texas

Other magnolia species listed in the program:

National Champion Ashe—Pennsylvania
National Champion Cucumber—Iowa
Minuteman—Massachusetts
Longwood Gardens Yellow
Cucumber—Pennsylvania
John Greenleaf Whittier—Maryland
National Champion Fraser—Tennessee
State Champion Pyramid—Alabama

What more natural way could there be to learn history than through a beloved tree!

For more information on historic tree plantings, write: Mr. James May, The Classic Tree Nursery, 8555 Plummer Road, Jacksonville, Florida 32219, 1-800-677-0727. 🌳