



Mepkin Abbey Garden Newsletter

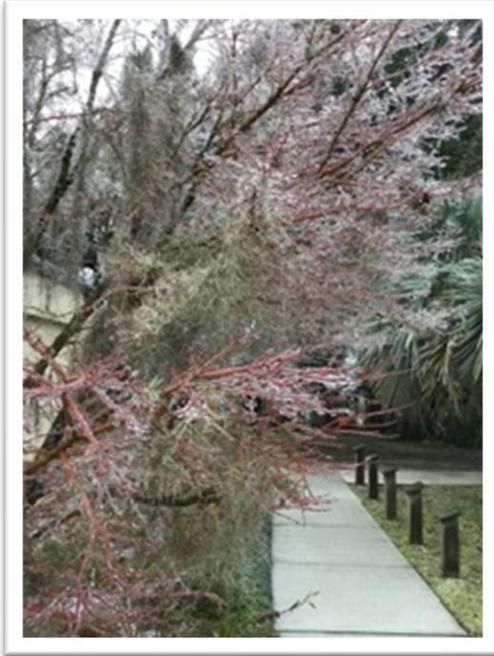
February 2022

Monthly Maintenance:

We were surprised by two storms this month. Both packing a Windy Winter Ice mix. They both left the Abbey with two weeks' worth of debris removal laying on the ground. Thankfully no serious limb damage to the trees but A LOT of moss fell from the Oaks. Father Jonas was able to get pictures of the ice storm, and they are amazing.



Kale at the Church



Top Left- Behind the Church, Top right- Refectory Entrance, Bottom-Cloister



Top left- the Dorm Top right-St Clare Bottom- Mark's Office

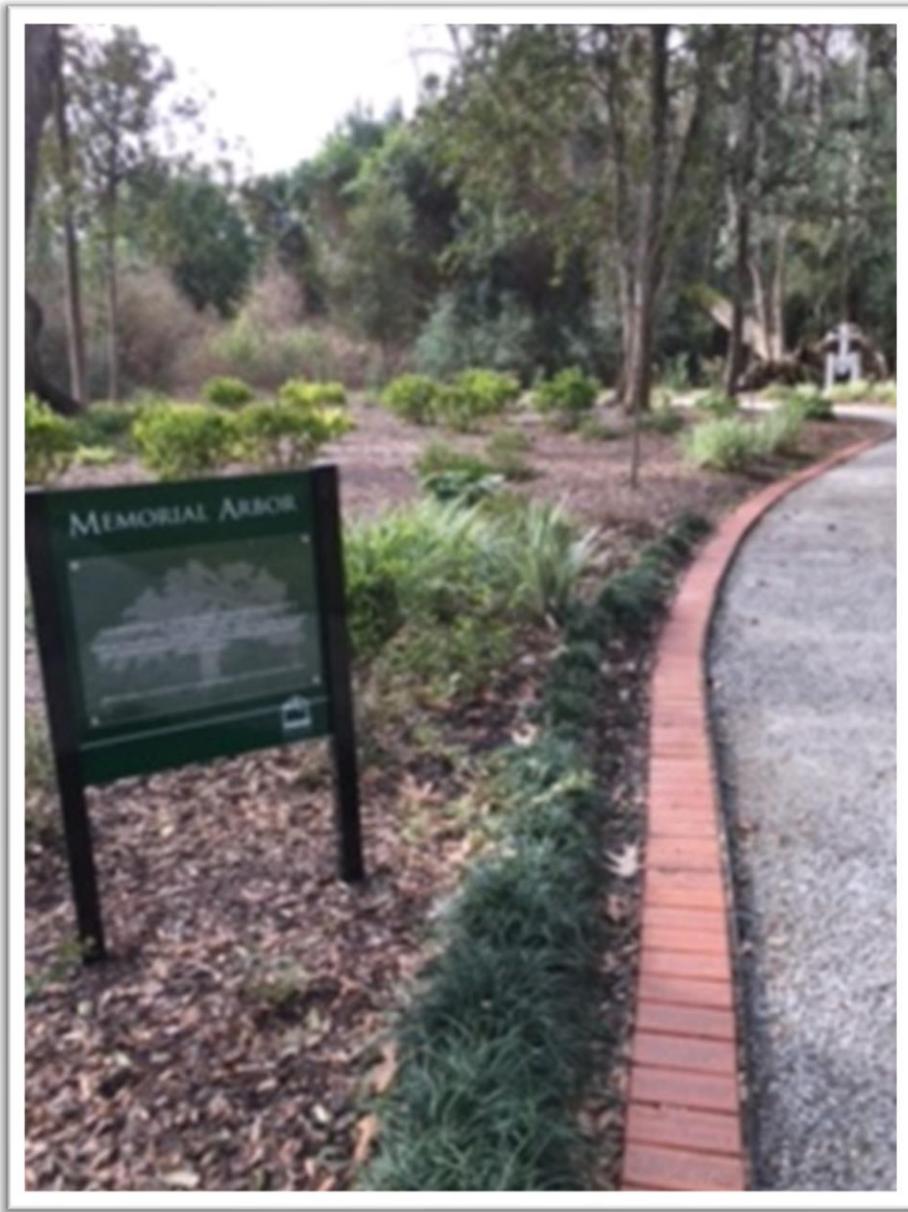


Top left- behind the Church Bottom left- Cloister Bottom right- Bell Tower

Memorial Arbor:

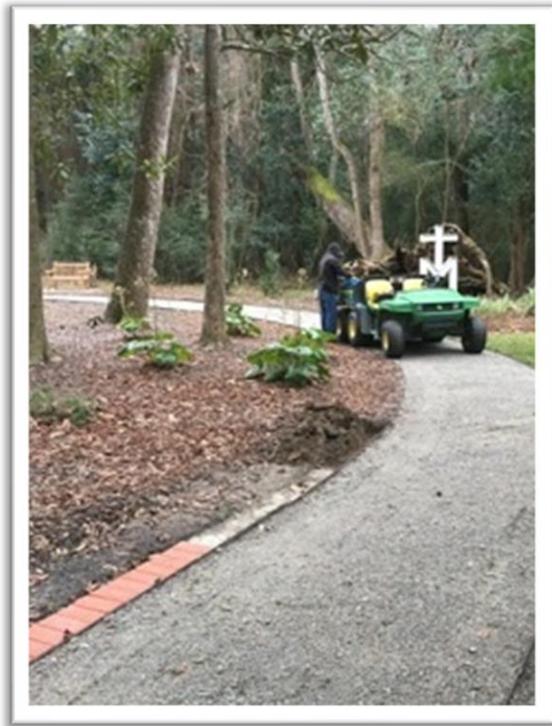
The memorial Arbor and Garden, vision of former Garden and Volunteer Director Craig Clark, is coming to fruition.

The Arbor was designed as a place where the visitors can go and contemplate or pray. The planted flowers, grasses, and trees are now established and growing well. The benches and memorialized bricks are in place reflecting on those who have gone on before us.



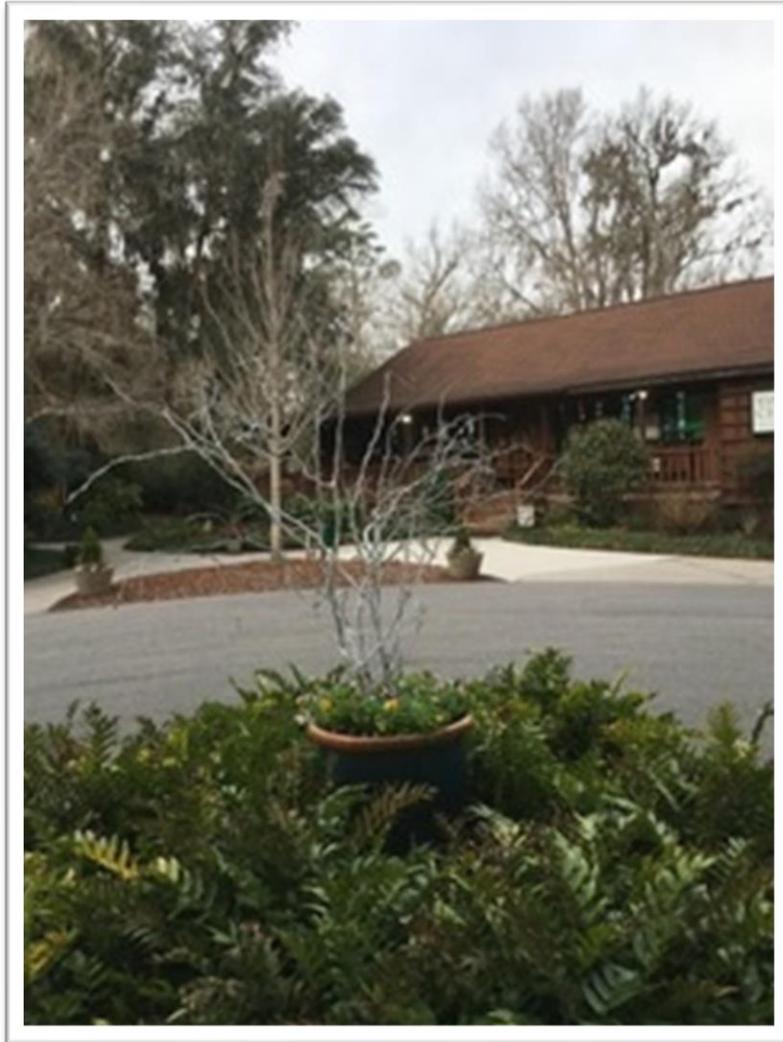


Chuck Dolsey cutting back the Farfugium and collecting seeds for the Greenhouse.



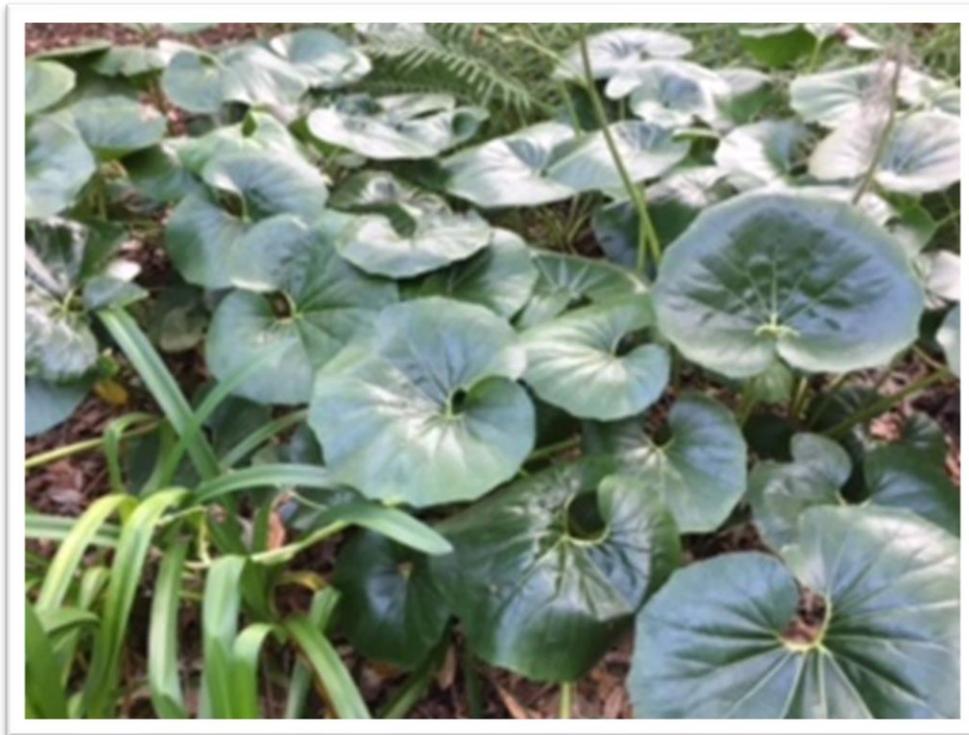
The trench is completed for the 41 bricks purchased for the Memorial Arbor walk last month and ready to go. One of the new teak benches pictured above with Chuck taking a well-deserved break.

Gift Shop:



Barb Misner created a lovely Spring arrangement for the turnabout in the parking lot at the Gift shop. She used yellow and purple violas, along with the white tree branch accents. The arrangement cheerfully greets all our guests.

St. Clare's Walk:



The Farfugium (common name-Tractor Seat Plants) have finally went to seed. We were lucky enough to do some root division earlier in the month and were quite successful!



We will plant these in the Spring in the Gardens.



The Acuba is very attractive at this time of year with its striking contrast to the established Crape Myrtle tree and Nandina is a bonus to the display.



Carolyn Pellitier picking up debris after the storm.

The Cloister:

The 2021 Creche Festival Wreath came down at the end of the month and we were able to catch these hard-working guys in action. Still amazed at the beauty in this wreath. Brother Joseph said he enjoyed seeing the colors change throughout the Festival.



Dennis manning the ropes



Al Ivester making sure the louvers on the wall don't get caught when coming down the wall.



Al Ivester and John Kadlecik preparing to move the wreath off the library rails. These guys made it look easy!

Luce Gardens:

While walking in Luce Gardens, I noticed a few of our lovely camellias in full bloom.



Double Reds



Variegated White with Fuchsia



Pure White



Sylvia Bras in Luce cleaning debris and weeds, always multi-tasking.

Columbarium:

The Columbarium construction is progressing well despite the weather. Here are few pictures before the landscaping begins.



Orchard:

We were lucky enough to grab some cuttings from Brother Joseph's Brown Turkey fig trees located at the Farm, and his Lemon Fig tree by the Senior wing for propagation. We plan on selling them in the Market at the Gift Shop and at our Spring Plant sale. The Tentative date is April 9th, 2022, from 9:00-2:00 pm. Please mark your calendars.



Lemon Fig Cuttings

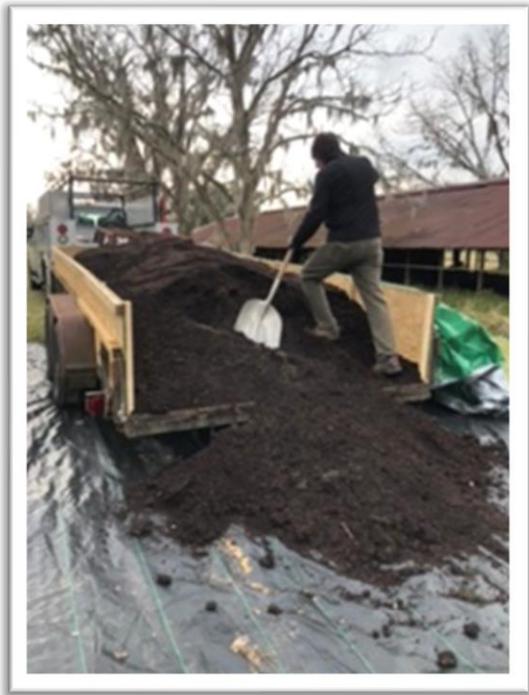


Brown Turkey Fig



Howard Bridgman prepping the Orchard for the Citrus trees donated from Steve Katzburg of Orangeburg earlier this Summer.

The Greenhouses:



Joel Burnett, Maintenance Director, coordinated a wonderful donation from ArborGen of potting mix for both greenhouses. We are so happy to continue to build relationships with people that love Mepkin and are willing to support it. The Farm and The Garden Volunteers have already started making good use of it.

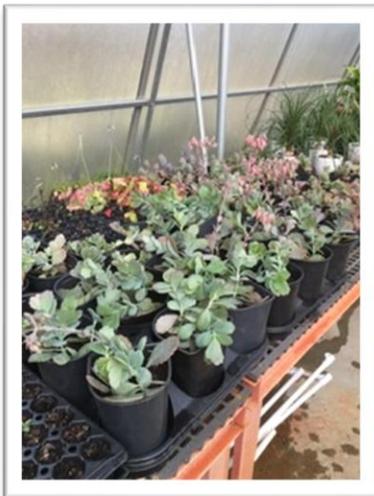


Joel Burnette- Maintenance

We had a Cold Tuesday at Mepkin. We decided to shift gears to stay warm and help the greenhouse a bit with some projects.



Jill Ewell, Linda Chiappone and Luanne Kern prepped the Lavender Kalanchoes and Silver Plectranthus for our Spring Plant Sale.



Lavender Kalanchoes



Silver Plectranthus

They also harvested Heirloom pumpkin seeds for Brother Ambrose's Garden and Fall decorations.



Heirloom Pumpkin Seeds



Elder Smedley and Elder Hawke setting up tables at the greenhouse for Brother Ambrose for The Farm vegetables.

Farmer's Market:

Brother Ambrose has a large selection of English Daisies for sale at the market. The daisies vary in color from pure white to burgundy tipped. They are located under the Arbor at the back of the gift shop. A one-gallon container is priced at \$7.99.



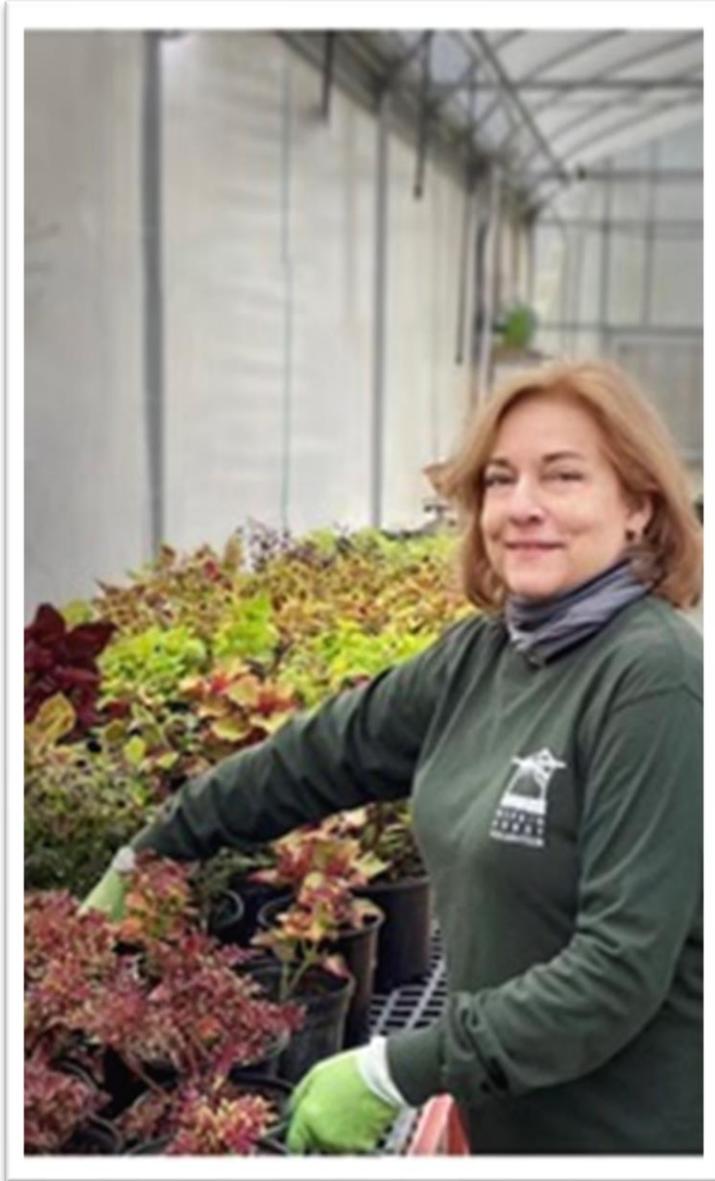
English Daisy



Brother Ambrose watering the Daisies and vegetables.

Volunteer News:

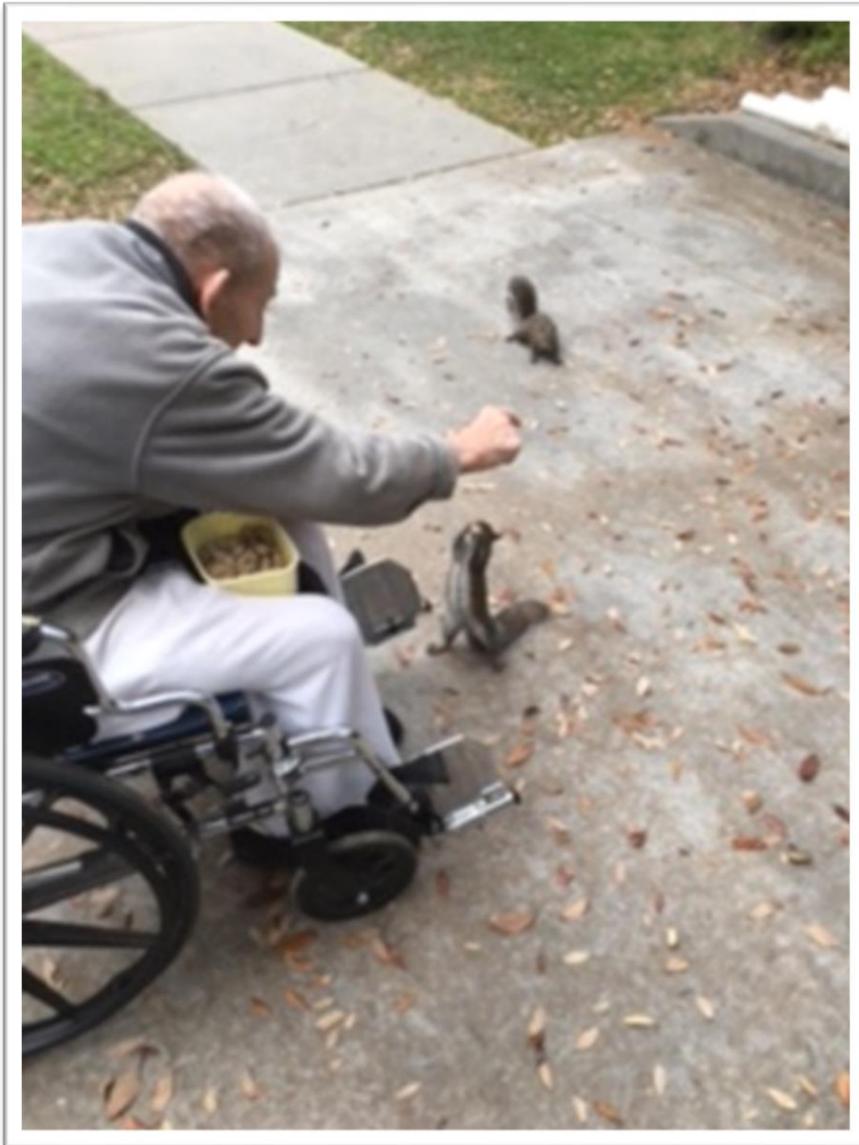
Welcome back to Sharon Landis. We are fortunate to have her join the volunteers again. She has been working on Saturdays.



Sharon Landis

Abbey News:

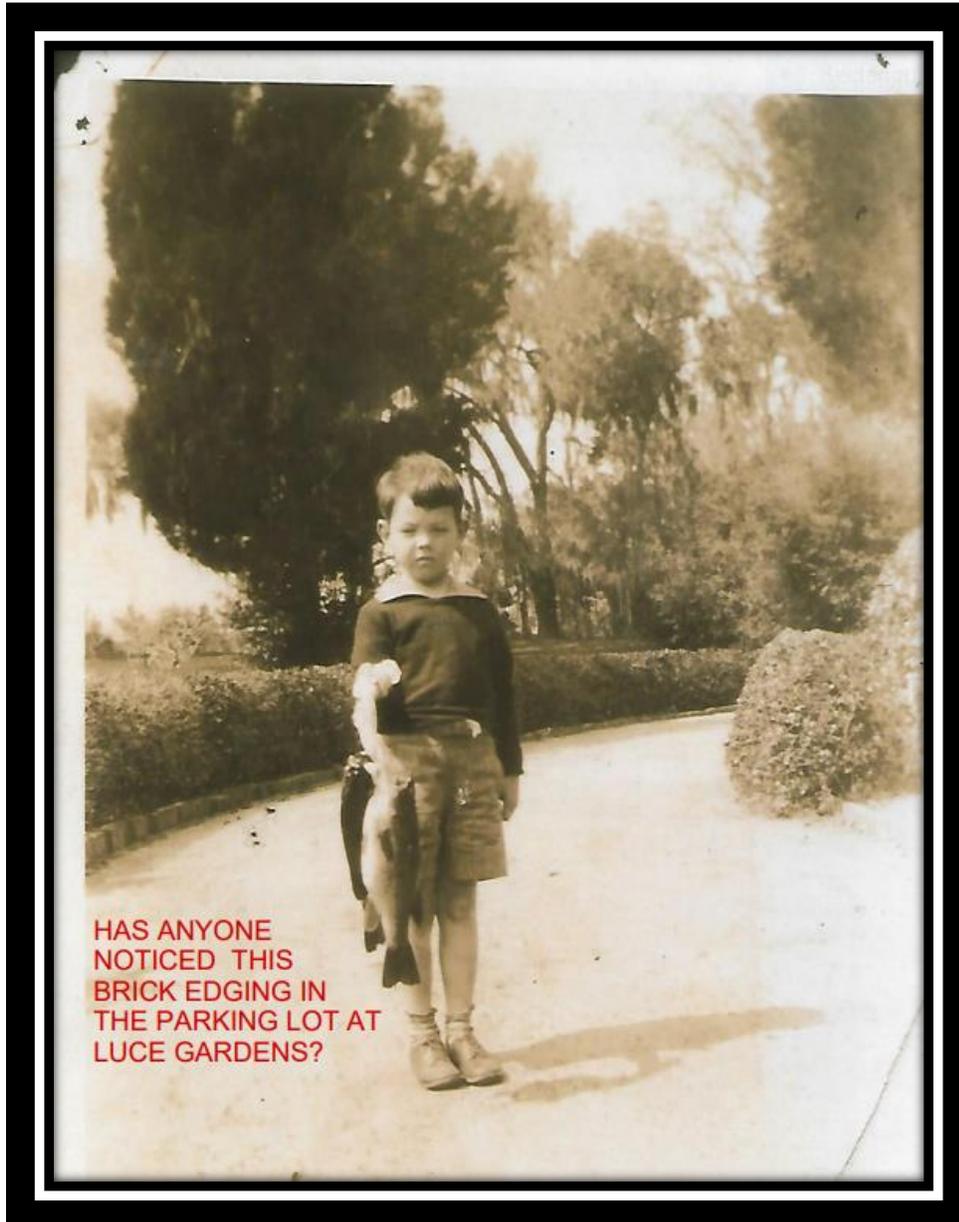
Brother Joseph caught in action working his magic behind the Senior Wing with the squirrels. He has such a unique human-animal bond. It is amazing to see.



Brother Joseph

Garden Director News:

If anyone knows me, they know I talk a lot about the History of Mepkin. We should all feel grateful to the monks for opening their home and letting us be a part of this historic place. It's a unique opportunity to step back in time while out here volunteering. I hope this segment will show you some of the pieces of history that we walk on every day. Here are some ***PIECES OF THE PAST.***



Pictured above is a member of the Johnson-Rutgers' family.

Photo is part of the Mepkin Archives.

Further research is needed to identify the young gentleman in the photo. The family lived at Mepkin until 1936.

James Wood Johnson purchased Mepkin in 1912. At the time of purchase, James was president of Johnson and Johnson manufacturing company a ready to use surgical dressings.

After the purchase of the Mepkin property, he acquired several tracts of neighboring land that once held Clermont, Washington and a part of the Strawberry Plantation.

Garden Inspiration:

"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home."

- Edith Sitwell

Special Thanks To:

Thank you to Jamie, Dennis, Sylvia, Brother Ambrose and Fr. Jonas for their contributions, and photos for this month's newsletter.

Kindly send submissions or questions for our monthly newsletter to:

mepkinabbeygardenvolunteers@gmail.com