LANDSLIDE: At risk

Lord and Schryver Legacy

Lord & Schryver Home Garden (/landscapes/lord-and-schryver-home-garden), Salem, OR

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Designed by: Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver

As principals of the first professional, woman-owned practice in the Pacific Northwest, Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver encouraged propagation of new plant varieties by working with local growers to introduce many East Coast plant species into the Northwest. The resulting subtle, but distinctly regional plant palette that influenced the work of countless designers. Today, their legacy is threatened by a lack of awareness of their significant contributions to the landscape architecture profession.

> "Order is beauty and beauty is order. But too much neatness without careless grace will not produce charm." -Edith Schryver

History

The Lord and Schryver landscape design firm was founded in 1929 by Salem-born Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver, a highly accomplished landscape designer who worked in Ellen Shipman's New York office in the early 1920s. Although they both attended the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture in Groton, Massachusetts, they met in 1927 on a study tour of European gardens sponsored by Lowthorpe and Cambridge School. While sharing similar tastes and aesthetic responses, their interests and skills were complementary; Schryver's specialty was design and construction, Lord's was plant composition. And thus they embarked on a 40-year career, based in Salem, Oregon, during which they designed over 250 projects, including residential, civic, and institutional landscapes throughout the Northwest.

(L) Edith Schryver and (R) Elizabeth Lord, 1929

Historically, Lord and Schryver's work represented a transition from a formal, symmetrical style of garden design influenced by Gertrude Jekyll and Ellen Shipman to one which responded in a distinctive way to the unique features of Northwest climate, soil, topography, and plant material. They created a style often characterized as "informal formality." In addition, introduced many plant species from the east coast into the Northwest palette by working with local growers, educating and encouraging them to propagate new varieties. Their work is characterized by subtle and creative plant combinations rather than by use of exotics.

In addition to their prolific and highly sought-after garden designs, Lord and Schryver were regarded as consummate professionals in the broadest sense as they worked to raise the profile of landscape architects by involving an audience beyond their clients. Lord took a keen interest in civic activities and worked with the Salem Parks Advisory Board, Salem Tree Committee, and the Capitol Planning Commission for more than a decade. Schryver taught advanced landscape design at Oregon State College, now Oregon State University, throughout her career. The pair also worked to educate the general public through newspaper articles, lectures, by

participating in the regular regional radio broadcast, Home Garden Hour.

They made their home, Gaiety Hollow, and conducted their practice in a house they had built in 1932 in the heart of Salem. They chose the most accomplished Salem architect, Clarence Smith, with whom they were to collaborate many times thereby putting into practice one of their cardinal principles; i.e., the integration of house and garden. Arguably the best of their designs, the Home Garden shows their skill at its most refined and most personal as they were unfettered by clients' wishes.

Deepwood Estate, 1937 and 2007

In *Space, Style and Structure: Building in the Northwest America,* Wallace Kay Huntington describes the founding of the firm as "one of the milestones in the history of Northwest garden design." The legacy of Lord and Schryver is important not only for its intrinsic historical value but also for its relevance for today. It is a composite of incorporating past influences, working within the realities of their time and setting a new standard of garden design and professionalism.

The Lord and Schryver Conservancy was founded in 2005 as a 501(c) 3 community based non-profit organization with the mission of "preserving and interpreting the legacy of Lord and Schryver to promote a greater understanding of their contribution to Northwest landscape architecture." One of the major efforts of the Conservancy has been the acquisition of the Home Garden with the ultimate goal of opening it to the public. While the current owners have been good stewards of the property for 20 years, the Conservancy has obtained a basic Right of First Refusal in hopes of protecting the property over the long-term. They have also undertaken a cultural landscape report to document the site's history and existing conditions and serve as a basis for future rehabilitation of the grounds.

While their heritage is an essential piece in the continuum of Northwest landscape design, it is the relevance of their life and work for the contemporary scene that makes their legacy a vital force today. In a series of 9 articles written for the Portland newspaper, The Oregonian, in 1932 they outlined the "main points to consider in designing an attractive garden" for a small urban lot. While several of their projects involved large estates, many were for areas around a city home. Indeed, their own Home Garden, without doubt the tour de force of their design principles, occupies 1/3 acre. That their basic design principles can be used today to achieve a place of wonder and repose in the ever diminishing land surrounding homes is the ultimate testament to their inherent value.

The iron fence is in the Scroll Garden, Deepwood Estate, Salem, OR

Threat

All the gardens designed by Lord and Schryver, with one exception, are in private ownership. With time, most of them have degraded for various reasons including lack of knowledge and/or interest as ownership changes, the labor intensive maintenance requirement, and the increased growth of tree canopy altering the growing conditions.

Their single project accessible by the public, the gardens at Historic Deepwood Estate, is a heavily-used park owned by the City of Salem. Designed as a series of garden rooms around an 1894 Victorian house, the site illustrates many of their design principals, however it is not exemplary of their skill at integrating house and garden due to the pre-existing conditions.

Therefore, the most significant threat to Lord and Schryver's legacy is that a lack of access to their work hinders raising public awareness about their design practices.

Get Involved

Private garden, 1950's design, Portland, OR

The Lord and Schryver Conservancy evolved out of a growing awareness of the treasure embodied in the legacy and a specific concern about the fate of the remaining gardens, most notably the Home Garden of Lord and Schryver. Along with educating the public about Lord and Schryver's legacy, the Conservancy has undertaken several project associated with both the Home Garden, Gaiety Hollow, and the gardens at the Historic Deepwood Estate. The projects include assembling an archive to supplement the collection of professional papers at the University of Oregon, conducting oral histories and documentation of surviving gardens, digitizing slides, and rehabilitating and maintaining the gardens as Deepwood Estate. The Conservancy would welcome volunteers of all skill levels to become involved with their wide-range of projects. Those interested in donating their time can contact the Conservancy at info@lord-schryverconservancy.org (mailto:info@lord-schryverconservancy.org) or (503) 838-0527.

Learn More

Historic Deepwood Estate (http://www.historicdeepwoodestate.org/)
1116 Mission Street SE
Salem, Oregon 97302

Print Resources

Huntington,Wallace Kay. *Lord & Schryver Monograph: Essentials of Landscape Architecture.* Lord & Schryver Conservancy, 2003.

Vaughan, Thomas. *Space, Style and Structure: Building in the Northwest America.* Oregon Historical Society, 1974.

Archives

Lord & Schryver Archives
Special Collections at the University of Oregon Knight Library (http://libweb.uoregon.edu/speccol/)

Online Resource

Lord and Schryver Conservancy (http://www.lord-schryverconservancy.org/)

POST YOUR OWN COMMENT
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Lord and Schryver Compendium, 1983-2011

Lord & Schryver Conservancy | Box 2755 | Salem, Oregon | 97308-2755

The *Lord and Schryver Compendium, 1983-2011* contains photocopies of articles, and several original publications, documenting the life and work of these two extraordinary women landscape architects. Please feel free to contact the Lord & Schryver Conservancy if you have any further questions about the material in this binder or would like additional information on specific garden designs, 1929-1969. www.lord-schryverconservancy.org

(Note: Please feel free to photocopy any of the material in this binder for personal research use only. The annotated bibliography below is organized in chronological order to correspond to the sequence of the information in this binder and uses a modified citation format presented in Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Paper, Theses, and Dissertations*, Sixth Edition.)

Huntington, Wallace Kay. "Parks and Gardens of Western Oregon." In *Space Style and Structure, Building in Northwest America*, ed. Thomas Vaughn and Virginia Guest Ferriday, 553-581. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974. (p. 563-564)

An often quoted overview of Lord and Schryver's garden designs.

Duniway, David C. "Lord-Schryver Landscape Architects." *Marion County History* 14 (1983-1984): 104-120.

Elizabeth Lord's autobiography, 1973
Elizabeth Lord's eulogy, 1976
Edith Schryver's eulogy, 1984

Duniway, David. *South Salem Past*. Salem: Marion County Historical Society, 1987.

Mission Street mansion has certain magic, enhanced by time and love
Unique, interesting Carriage House adds flavor to Deepwood
Volunteer efforts help restore mansion's birdcage gazebo
Robertson house added to the National Register in 1983
Deepwood Wedding Garden established in the 1930s.

Helphand, Kenneth I. and Nancy D. Rottle. "Cultivating Charm." *Garden Design* 7-3 (Autumn 1988): 26-33.

An overview of Lord and Schryver's personal histories and professional achievements with an in-depth discussion of their garden designs at Deepwood in the late 1920 to the mid 1940s.

Jacky, Elaine. "Landscaper's Landscape." *Pacific Horticulture* 51-4 (Winter 1990): 46-51.

An in-depth discussion of Lord and Schryver's Home Garden at Gaiety Hollow.

White, Laura. "Transplanted Traditions: the Pacific Northwest Gardens of Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver." MS. thesis, University of Oregon, 1992.
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Lord and Schryver Commissions, 1929-1958

Helphand, Kenneth. "Lord and Schryver." In *Pioneers of American Design*, ed. Charles A. Birnbaum and Lisa E. Crowder, 80-82. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1993.
Brief biographical sketches with a concise discussion of their garden designs.

Lord, Elizabeth and Edith Schryver. "Sunday Oregonian Articles, 1932" Edited by the Lord & Schryver Conservancy. *Essentials of Landscape Architecture*. Salem: Lord & Schryver Conservancy, 2003.
A reprint of nine newspaper articles written by Lord and Schryver for a residential audience which were published in Portland's *Oregonian* newspaper from March 6 – May 1, 1932.

Deck, Liz. "Interpreting Classic Signature Elements for Garden Design: Rediscovering Pacific Northwest Landscape Architects Lord & Schryver, Salem, Oregon." MS. thesis, University of Oregon, 2005.
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Anonymous. "Lord and Schryver Legacy." *Shaping the American Landscape* (Landslide 2009).
A brief acknowledgement of Lord and Schryver's garden designs to encourage their preservation.

Roberts, Ruth, Gretchen Carnaby and Bobbie Dolp. "Careless Grace – The Gardens of Lord and Schryver." *Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin* 71-1 (Spring 2009): 16-26.

Carnaby, Gretchen, Wallace Kay Huntington, Ruth Roberts and Ross Sutherland. *Influences Find Expression*. Salem: Lord & Schryver Conservancy, 2012.
An in-depth discussion of the lives and garden designs of these two landscape architects.

Rose, Sharon and Bonnie Hull. "Lord and Schryver, Shaping Our Cultural Landscape." Salem: Hallie Ford Museum of Art, 2011.
Published for the exhibition at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Salem, Oregon, June 22 - September 18, 2011.

60 Colonial Residence, Elizabeth Lord House, Lord and Schryver Office, 545 Mission Street S.E.;
Assessor's Map 27DB073W 073W-27DB-00900
Owner: Vincent and Sylvia Strand, 545 Mission Street S.E., Salem, OR 97302

Secondary (House)

Secondary (Gardens)

Description: Colonial - 1932; a one and one-half story wood frame, shingle siding and brick house with a rectangular block and one east wing. The roof is gabled with wood shingles with an outside end chimney with a corbeled cap at the west side. Over the front door is a hood with a console with wood shingles while the door contains a small single pane window. The first story contains five adjoining eight-pane casement windows with decorative trim above them. The second story of the central block contains two pair of eight pane casement windows with small cross gabled overhead with brackets. The east wing contains the garage and a second story gabled dormer with twelve panes. Windows around the rest of the house are a mixture of six-over-six double hung sash windows and casement. Large paned bay windows and glass paned French doors look out on the back gardens.

The home was designed as a notable collaboration between Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver and architect Clarence L. Smith. Misses Lord and Schryver were the first female landscape architects in the Northwest and had major influences on the landscape design of the district (the landscape architecture firm, the gardens, and the architect of the house are discussed in detail in the significance portion of the nomination). The gardens serve as an excellent example of their works and still retains the original vegetation and design. The current owners are the first owners to live in the house since Miss Lord and Miss Schryver passed away.

An Oregon white oak, over 300 years old, at the Lord residence is one of Salem's designated heritage trees, designated in 1982.

61 French Renaissance Residence, David W. and Beryl Eyre House, 505 Mission Street S.E.; Assessor's Map 27DB073W 073W-27DB-01000
Owner: James W. and Debra B. Millegan, 505 Mission Street S.E., Salem, OR 97302.

Secondary

Description: French Renaissance - 1926; a one and one-half story "U" shaped, wood frame house with shingle sinding and gable roofs with composition shingles. The east front wing contains an outside end tall chimney with a corbeled cap flanked by six pane casement windows with round tops and plain trim. The west front wing contains a bay window with a front twenty pane window and twenty pane casement windows on either side. The west wing also has an outside tall corbeled cap chimney on the west side. The front porch is covered and contains two, eight pane casement windows which swing out and a front door with a frontispiece entrance framed by pilasters carrying an entablature. The front walkway and porch is composed of pieces of slate. There is a shed dormer above the front porch. The rear of the house contains French doors on the west side. In the center of the rear of the house is a three sided, one story tower with a turret roof. Windows are predominantly casement type which open outward.

The house originally stood at 370 N. Summer and was relocated when the State Transportation Building was constructed (Ca. 1950). The house was deisgned by the noted Salem architect, Clarence L. Smith, and was originally built for David and Beryl Eyre. Mr. Eyre was vice-president of Ladd and Bush Bank and was very prominent. It was moved to this site by Harry Dorman, former State Finance Director.

Glen C. McAlister: The Daniel Jarman House, a uniquely styled Spanish Colonial house in the district, is the work of California architect Glen C. McAlister (1873-1961). The Spanish Colonial Period house, built in 1929, was similar to eight other houses designed by McAlister in the Beverly Hills community in California.

Clarence L. Smith: Clarence L. Smith (1894-1951), Salem's major architect between the two world wars, created a legacy of fashionable period style residences in Salem. The significance of the district is enhanced by the collection of six of his designs within its boundaries. Between 1923 and 1942, Clarence Smith is credited with building or designing about twenty-five residences. Two of his outstanding houses, the Curtiss Cross House (1924), 1635 Fairmount Avenue South, and the Dr. and Mrs. Charles G. Robertson House (1932), 460 Leffelle Street South, are now listed on the National Register. Two other of his particularly fine residences are the Herbert and Rose Stiff House (1937), 796 Winter Street Northeast, the Governor's Mansion for the State of Oregon; and the Otto and Modjeska Johnson House (1930), 355 Lincoln Street South, the home of the Willamette University president. The six Clarence Smith-designed houses in the district are listed below. Others in the district may be attributed to him, but await further research and confirmation:

Mrs. Ethel L. Patton House (1938), 420 Leslie Street S.E.
Robert and Marguerite Rieder House (1942), 760 Liberty Street S.E.
Elizabeth Lord House (Lord and Schryver Office) (1932), 545 Mission Street S.E.
David and Beryl Eyre House (1926), 505 Mission Street S.E.
Walter and Della Smith House (1938), 460 Mission Street S.E.
Custer and Virginia Ross House (1934), 787 Cross Street S.E.

Clarence L. Smith was born in Portland, Oregon, and was three years an apprentice to Charles Ertz and, subsequently, O.L. DuPuy in his native city. He later served as draftsman to Gibb and Waltz in Ithaca, New York (1915-1916), Green and Wicks in Buffalo, New York (1916-17), Kidd of New York City (1918), and Sutton and Whitney in Portland, Oregon (1919-1920). He studied two years at the Cornell University School of Architecture. He arrived in Salem as draftsman for contractor Cuyler Van Patten.

Although Smith used the title of architect for at least ten years, he qualified for a license by the senior examination of the State Board of Architect Examiners as late as 1940, and he did not keep his fees paid after that year. Those who knew him in Salem characterized Smith as a creative person, a sort of "unsung artist" and "genius." All acknowledged his modesty and wonderful ability to design. In 1938 he took the examination of the State Board of Architect Examiners and failed but one subject, architectural history. In 1940, the year in which he was successful in his bid for a license, letters of recommendation were submitted on his behalf by noted community leaders including Paul Wallace, William S. Walton, and J. M. Devers.

It is ironic that Smith failed in architectural history, as his finely-designed residences cover the range and variety of period styles popular during the 1920s and 1930s and reflect a learned knowledge of their historic precedents. Many of his projects were developed jointly with the landscape architectural firm of Lord and Schryver. This union created residences of great unity and fine design relationships between the house and the grounds. When Elizabeth Lord built her home and firm office at 545 Mission Street Southeast, Clarence Smith was selected as architect. Possibly the most mature work of Smith's, the Dr. and Mrs. Charles G. Robertson House, 460 Leffelle Street South, also contains one of the most beautiful and well-designed example of garden architecture by Lord and Schryver. This collaboration of architects, building and landscape, set a high ideal for creative and intellectual design in Salem and the Pacific Northwest.

Landscape Architecture and Community Public Spaces

Lord and Schryver, Landscape Architects: Of major significance to the historic district is the private and public gardens of the Oregon pioneer landscape architectural firm of Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver. Their contribution to the neighborhood displays some of the finest works of that firm, and the gardens designed and executed by them retain the integrity of their original creation and pattern.

Considered one of the milestones in the history of Northwest garden design was the 1929 founding of the firm of Lord and Schryver in Salem. They were the first women landscape architects in the Northwest. Elizabeth Lord, daughter of William P. Lord, Chief Justice of Oregon's Supreme Court (1880-94) and Governor of Oregon (1895-99), and Edith Schryver, a Hudson River Dutch from the East Coast, were both educated in New England.

Lord graduated from the Lawthorpe School of Landscape Architecture, Groton, Mass. Schryver graduated from landscaping school in 1922. She then worked for the prestigious firm of Ellen Shipman in New York City. Shipman was a protege of Charles Adam Platt, famous New York architect (1861-1933). The two women met in the 1920s in Europe on a tour of estates and gardens. Lord suggested that Schryver join her in Oregon to establish a landscape firm, with Schryver concentrating on design and construction and Lord specializing in plant composition.

The landscape firm of Lord and Schryver brought to Oregon an intellectual Eastern command of craft and style, combined with an instructive sense of landscape taste unknown in Oregon during this period. For the next four decades, the office designed and supervised work in Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, and Salem. Though the volume of work was comparatively small, the quality was consistently high. (Elisabeth Lord died in 1976 and Edith Schryver died in 1984). Their former residence at 545 Mission Street was constructed by Clarence Smith in 1932 and contains fine unaltered examples of their landscape style. These gardens contain a very old oak tree recognized by the city of Salem as Heritage Tree.

In addition to their work in landscaping, the two women provided much public service to Salem, incluing the promotion of public parks, tree planting, the Capitol Planning Commission, the Salem Art Association, Bush Park House furnishing and park landscaping, the acquisition of Deepwood by the city, the Marion County Historical Society, the Oregon Historical Society, etc.

Wallace Kay Huntington, in an article on landscapes in Space, Style and Structure: Building in Northwest America (1974), establishes the significance of this pioneer landscape firm, particularly as relates to the private garden at their residence:

> "...Lord and Schryver's meticulous detailing was available to clients developing no more than a city lot, and the structural clarity of formal walk, panels of lawn, boxwood edging and allees of flowering shrubs were utilized to dignify Georgian, French Provencial or Tudor town houses. Plant composition with them was an art form--albeit fragile and transient--and in the Salem garden of Elizabeth Lord we have, still surviving....a lost art. So subtle are the foliage colors and textures and so skillfully arranged is the succession of bloom that, like an impressionist painting, it may at first seem deceptively simple but upon closer examination, the incredible command and knowledge of their media--plants instead of paints--is truly stunning. Here the geometry of the compartmental scheme is at its most effective and the quality of design in arbor and fences at its classic finest. Anyone who conceives of a formal garden as being static has only to study the calculated intricacy of spatial relationships in this tour de force of garden design."

The landscape firm is accredited with about twenty-five gardens in Salem. Several of the gardens are already included in the National Register of Historic Places, as features contributing to the significance of the subject buildings. Within the district are the Deepwood gardens, Ca. 1930, and the Daniel B. Jarman gardens, 1929. Not in the district boundaries is the Dr. and Mrs. Charles G. Robertson house (1929) at 460 South Leffelle Street. Other works of the firm outside the district include the Virgil T. Golden Funeral Service, Salem; the historical plantings at the McLoughlin House, Oregon City; and the Herbert Hoover (Minthorn) House, Newberg.

The most significant example of their work in a public garden in Salem is at the Deepwood mansion. These gardens are recognized statewide for their excellence. The Powell garden, added to the late 19th century Dr. Luke A. Port house, was commenced in 1929 and added to for over a decade. Its original concept was an ingenious series of related spaces surrounded by woodland and contained by a variety of framing devices that formed a structural skeleton: boxwood and holly hedges, fences, iron railings, and shrubbery borders. Spatially, one of the most interesting gardens in Oregon, it also has one of the highest quality accessories--the decorative wrought iron gazebo is from the rose garden at the Lewis and Clark Exposition (1905) at Portland, used as the terminus of the main north-south axis. The "scroll" garden originally had a large oriental jar purchased in the Philippines by Lord and Schryver. The garden can be characterized as having subtle spatial relationships and a relaxed formality which gives spirit to the Victorian house. The garden is under restoration at present to its original condition by the Deepwood Garden Club.

In 1929, Lord and Schryver designed the gardens to complement the Spanish Colonial period house of Daniel Jarman on Gaiety Hill. The private garden to the west of the house is enclosed by a wall. The garden is characterized by formal parterres edged with boxwood and outlined by flagstone paths. A concrete and tile-trimmed octagonal fountain pool is the ceterpiece of the garden, and a small pegola-shaded tile-paved terrace is the focal point at the far west wall. The beds and walks have survived, and this is one of the gardens wherein the firm's design is wholly intact.

The Walter and Della Smith residence (1938), designed by Clarence L. Smith, is one of the Lord and Schryver gardens built to accompany a modest house still containing the integrity of the original design, this garden is under restoration. This garden, characterized with boxwood outlining the paths, retains the original sundial and birdbath and basic plantings, including now mature tree-like lilacs and camelias. Mrs. Walter Smith was a personal friend of Miss Lord and Miss Schryver. The garden they designed for the Smith residence included a proliferation of spring blooming plants and shrubs. Mrs. Smith was a member of the Gaiety Hill Garden Club and her garden was frequently part of a tour of local gardens for the public.

Further research on the historic district may reveal other gardens attributed to Lord and Schryver. To date, a comprehensive list of their works in the Salem area has not been developed.

Other Private Gardens: In addition to the Lord and Schryver gardens in the district are several noteworthy gardens about which little is known at this time. These noteworthy gardens in the district include but are not limited to:

Smith-Fry House, High Street, gardens in 1912
Front garden spaces at houses, 651-625 Church Street SE, Ca. 1920

Bush's Pasture Park: This 95-acre park, a legacy to the city of Salem and initial gift from the Bush family, is a major open space landscape. Possibly no other city in the Pacific Northwest has a "pasture" in its immediate environs dating from the 1860s. It is most unique also for a grand Victorian era mansion and all of its original surrounding property to survive as a unit, without major intrusions of residential subdivisions or street development.

The present Bush's Pasture Park consists of several pieces of property, carved out of Bush's original 100 acres. The first 57 acres was given to the city on January 15, 1917, by A. N. and Lulu Hughes Bush and is the "lowlands" area on the eastern portion of the property. A 9-acre parcel of this property was sold to Willamette University in 1946, now including McCulloch Stadium and ballfields. The "uplands" area, or west/south area, of 43 acres was offered to the city in 1944, for $175,000. In the first election, voters agreed to accept the offer, but failed to pass the bond issue needed to confirm the agreement. The bonds, necessary to complete the purchase, was authorized by voters in a second election, held January 11, 1945. The purchase cost of this portion had been reduced to $150,000. The Bush House and a few acres were acquired by the city of Salem in 1953 as a historical museum. Subsequent enlargements of Bush's Pasture Park have occurred with the addition of the Deepwood estate, four acres, acquired in 1971 and 1973 and the Yew Park Entrance, a vacant area of two acres acquared in 1979.