



For Immediate Release

December 4, 2008

For more information contact:

Amy Chamberlin

(904) 899-6034

achamberlin@cummer.org

**The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens Presents
the Inaugural Garden Publication**

Jacksonville, Fla. – The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens presents the inaugural garden publication, *A Legacy in Bloom: Celebrating a Century of Gardens at The Cummer* by garden historian and writer Judith B. Tankard. In words and pictures, this book tells the story of the gardens at The Cummer from their inception in 1903 by Ossian Cole Simonds, a prominent Midwestern landscape architect to Belgian landscape artist, Francois Goffinet's far-reaching visions 100 years later. Throughout the story runs the determined Ninah Cummer, founder of the museum, without whose foresight in hiring an incomparable team of experts and her own passion for horticultural knowledge, the gardens would never have existed.

“The gardens at The Cummer are nationally significant for several reasons and this is why I felt so compelled to write a book about them,” said Author Judith B. Tankard. “The most important is that it represents the work of several pre-eminent landscape designers: Ellen Shipman, Ossian C. Simonds, William Lyman Phillips, and the famous Olmsted firm of Boston. The second reason, which is equally unusual, is that the garden structure and some of the larger plantings have survived unchanged over many decades.”

The publication is divided into nine sections. It opens with a foreword by Museum Director Maarten van de Guchte and an introduction by landscape historian and author Judith B. Tankard. The book then moves into the following sections: History of the Gardens, History of the Cummer Family, The English Garden, The Italian Garden and The Cummer Oak. It then closes with a Chronology of the Cummer Family and the Museum and a list of Selected Readings. Throughout the book, there are many colorful photographs of the gardens by Mick Hales and a few historic photographs provided by the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens archives.

The garden publication is made possible through the proceeds from Garden Week 2003. This annual event is organized and managed by The Cummer Council, the oldest affinity group of the museum. The Chairs of the event in 2003, Sally Barnett and Mary Watson, conceived the original idea and kept a watchful eye over the completion of this historic publication. In addition to the Garden Week Chairs, the Garden Committee and Chair Linda Alexander are a devoted group of garden-lovers who have spearheaded various garden-enhancing efforts over the years and contributed to this book project.

“All of the Garden Committee members and Garden Week Chairs deserve our expression of deepest gratitude for their longstanding interest, advocacy and love of the Cummer Gardens and for their assistance and guidance with this publication,” said Museum Director Maarten van de Guchte. “Noted garden historian Judith Tankard should be recognized for the contribution of her insightful essay about the history of the Cummer Gardens.”

The Garden Publication is available for purchase in The Cummer Store for \$39 for hardback cover and \$29 for soft back cover. Visitors can enjoy excerpts and

photographs from the book by visiting the six kiosks that are placed in the gardens for the next several months. Two will be placed in the Italian garden, two in the English garden, one on the lower tier of the gardens in Mr. Cummer's putting green and one on the upper tier of the garden.

For more information or to purchase the book, *A Legacy in Bloom: Celebrating a Century of Gardens at The Cummer*, please call (904) 356-6857.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Judith B. Tankard is a writer, editor and consultant specializing in landscape history. She received an M.A. in art history from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, and has taught landscape design history at the Landscape Institute, Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, since 1987. In 2000, she was awarded a Gold Medal by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for her role in the advancement of historic New England gardens. Her articles have been published in *Antiques Magazine*, *Apollo*, *Country Life*, *Horticulture*, *Hortus*, *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, *Old-House Interiors*, and other publications.

ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER:

Mick Hales was born in England and spent his childhood in Devon, England; Pakistan; and Nigeria. He studied photography at the London College of Printing and published his first book, *Secret Landscapes*, in 1980. In 1983, he moved to New York and photographed gardens and interiors for *House and Garden* magazine. As main photographer he has published 29 books and more than 250 magazine articles. He lives in Columbia County, New York, with his wife, the painter Christine Simoneau Hales.