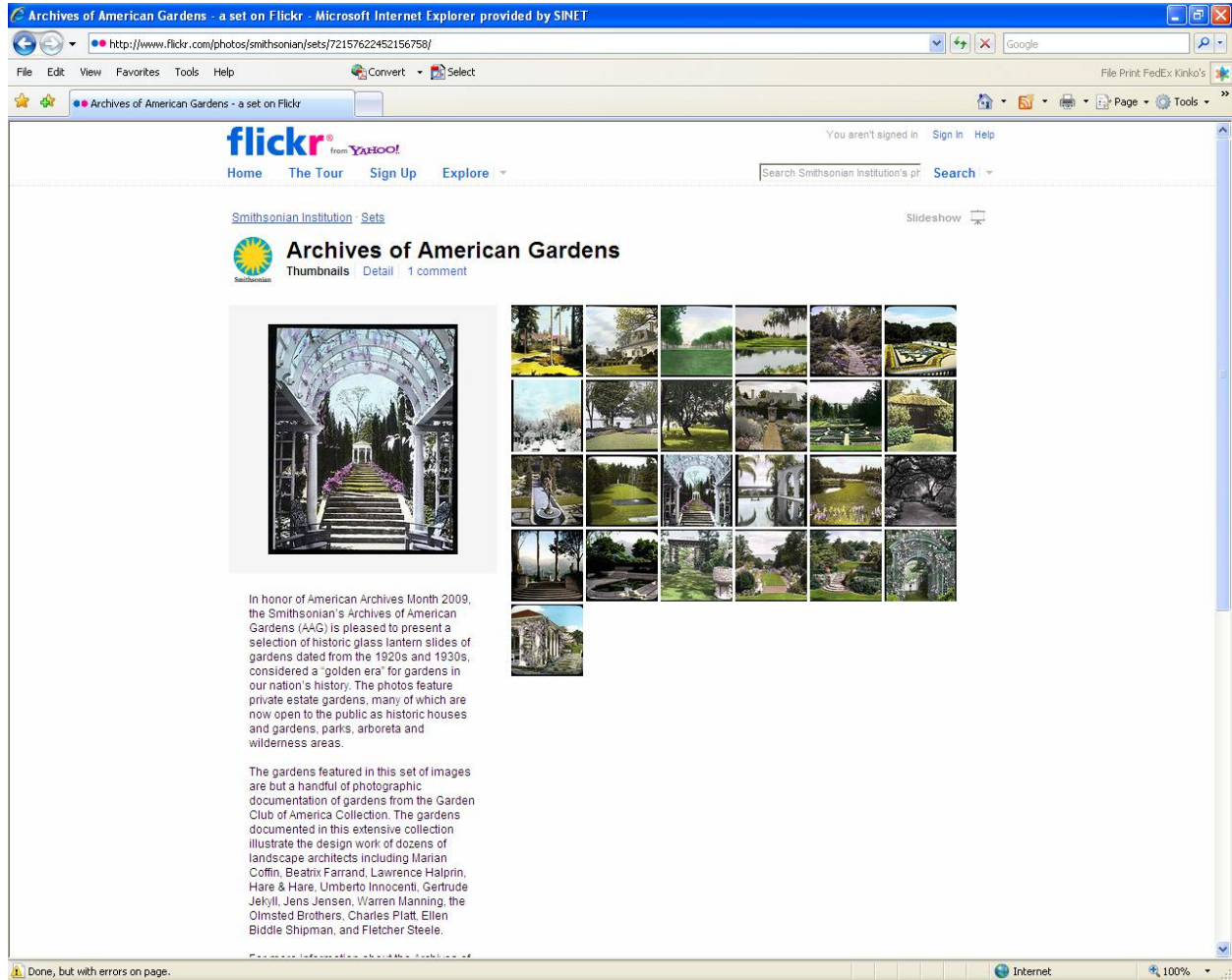


Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Gardens

2009 SAA Submission for Best Successfully Implemented Campaign



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The Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Gardens (AAG) celebrated American Archives Month by reaching out to the general public as well as a targeted audience of garden professionals to raise awareness about the Archives' holdings and the importance of archival resources in general. Given the popularity and impact demonstrated by examples from other Smithsonian photographic collections on Flickr Commons, AAG staff uploaded an inaugural selection of images of historic glass lantern slides from the Garden Club of America Collection in celebration of American Archives Month.

In addition to posting to Flickr, archives staff crafted a simple blast email announcement (Appendix I) using the sample press release provided by SAA online. They compiled a distribution list of editors of garden magazines with online versions and also targeted garden history and garden enthusiast bloggers from across the country. As a result, the Archives' announcement made it into several online venues, including the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) Newsletter for October, the Garden Design Magazine Blog: www.gardendesignonline.com/gardendesignonline/2009/10/historic-garden-photos-.html and Twitter: <http://twitter.com/chicagogardener/statuses/4769466785> to name a few.

While initially AAG staff were not sure what the response would be, the AAG images on Flickr have proven to be incredibly popular. For example, this image: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/smithsonian/3953283278/> received 534 views the very first day the images were loaded. Staff have even received a number of research inquiries from people who previously had not been aware of the Archives of American Gardens and its many resources. The following is a blog entry about one inquiry staff received about glass lantern slides: <http://blog.photography.si.edu/2009/10/02/understanding-the-magic-lantern/>.

While thousands of scanned images of the glass lantern slides are currently available to the public in the Smithsonian Institution's online catalog, Flickr has provided the archives with yet another portal for potential researchers to find out about the Archives of American Gardens and its wealth of garden images. The relatively simple action of uploading a handful of images and launching a campaign to target a specialized audience of garden enthusiasts has proven to be very effective and far-reaching. Let's hear it for another instance of "More Product, Less Process"!

Appendix I. Email Announcement

Archives of American Gardens Joins Flickr In Celebration of American Archives Month in October

WASHINGTON, DC, October 8, 2009 – In celebration of American Archives Month this October, the Smithsonian Institution’s Archives of American Gardens has joined archives across the Smithsonian in contributing images to the Flickr community. We invite garden writers and bloggers to visit, tag and comment on the images in the Archives of American Gardens Photo Set which features a selection of historic glass lantern slides of gardens dating from the 1920s and 1930s, considered a “golden era” for gardens in our nation’s history.

The Archives of American Gardens, housed in the Smithsonian’s Horticulture Services Division, offers landscape designers, historians, researchers, and garden enthusiasts access to a collection of approximately 80,000 photographic images and records that document a wide variety of historic and contemporary gardens throughout the United States. Because gardens are both fragile and ephemeral, photographs and drawings are often the only means of obtaining visual data on the evolution of America’s public and private landscapes. The Archives preserves important resources for investigating this significant aspect of U.S. cultural and ecological history.

American Archives Month is a collaborative effort by professional organizations and repositories around the nation to highlight the importance of records of enduring value. Archivists are professionals who assess, collect, organize, preserve and provide access to information that has lasting value, and they help people find and understand the information they need in those records.

Visit the Archives of American Gardens Photo Set in Flickr:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/smithsonian/sets/72157622452156758/>

Grab the URL and share a slideshow of the Photo Set:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/smithsonian/sets/72157622452156758/show/>

About the Archives of American Gardens: www.gardens.si.edu/horticulture/res_ed/AAAG/home.htm

Questions? Please call 202-633-5840 or email aag@si.edu