

Garden Review Concord's Memorial Garden

Debbie Moore Clark

Sometimes clipping articles pays off. A 2005 article saved from *The Charlotte Observer*, reviewing Concord's Memorial Garden led me to take my parents, new residents of Charlotte, for an early spring visit on April 7, 2006. Described as a "botanical gem in downtown Concord," by the *Observer's* Gail Smith-Arrants, this 3-acre garden is tucked behind the walls of a 200-year-old church cemetery located at 36 Spring Street, S.W. In Smith-Arrants' phrase, "It's packed with 140 varieties of Azalea and 35,000 bulbs, including hybrid tulips, daffodils and hyacinths. Flower beds curve around waterfalls, a white wisteria drips with mystery and the curious hummingbird moth perches on blue scillas." Peak bloom for the spring garden explodes into riotous color the first two weeks of April, so be sure to reserve a date in that time frame for a visit.

A map of the garden is available at the gate, listing points of interest, although I found it clumsy to use given its upside-down orientation to the way one might meander the paths. Nonetheless, the garden is lovely, peacefully enclosed by rock walls and hedges, and chock full of gorgeous spring color. Wear comfortable walking shoes for your visit as the garden is situated on a terraced slope. Be prepared to climb steps and maneuver curved paths as you take in the garden's serene beauty.

Given its distance from Charlotte, North Carolina, figure an hour or less for one-way travel and allow at least an hour in the garden.

The garden is pristinely maintained through a trust bequeathed by Marshal Phifer Williamson in 1966. Sallie, his mother, began restoration of the old cemetery garden, which had fallen into neglect, in 1930. The garden is open 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays and 1:00 – 5:30 p.m. Sundays. Admission is free. For more information, call 704.786.8009 or visit www.memorialgarden.info/. DMC



Debbie Moore Clark is an Extension Master Gardener with Mecklenburg County, NC, who loves to photograph plants and gardens. She and her husband Mack enjoy traveling and always visit one or more gardens when away from their home in Charlotte, NC. This review was first published in *The Thymes*, March 2008.

Caption: Debbie, sitting in the stump chair at Memorial Garden, Concord, NC, during her second visit to the garden, a frigid day on April 7, 2009.