

Welcome to the Pharmacy of 1761!

The medical garden at Bethabara Park is the oldest well-documented medical herb garden in the United States. This recreation is based on a map of the *Hortus Medicus* drawn by Brother Christian Gottlieb Reuter in June 1761. Br. Reuter was the surveyer, forester, and naturalist for the Moravian settlers in Wachovia (what now is the middle third of Forsyth county). A modern interpretation of his original map is inside this brochure.

Who Created This Garden?

It originally was planted in 1753 by Br. Hans Martin Kalberlahn, the first physician for the new Moravian community. As ill or injured residents or other individuals sought his care, Bethabara quickly grew into the area's regional medical center. When Br. Kalberlahn died of typhus in 1760, he was replaced by Br. Johann Augustus Shubert, who planted the garden as it appears today.

How Were These Plants Used?

Medicine was practiced very differently in the early colonial period. Most physicians learned by apprenticeship and few were formally trained. Medical care was not standardized, so how patients were treated depended on the doctor's unique training, experience, and personal beliefs. Most doctors and lay healers of the time believed disease resulted from imbalances in four body fluids called 'humors.' Treatment was aimed at restoring this balance by stimulating sweating, salivation, urination, or the bowels. Blood-letting (or bleeding) also was still widely used.

Much like we use over-the-counter medicines today, the Moravians used simple home

remedies made from the plants they grew or collected themselves. Plants from the medical garden were different; they were collected by the physician, who compounded them into medicines using traditional recipes. These medicines were obtained directly from the physician or apothecary, along with careful instruction on their use, much like our modern prescription medications.

What Are These Plants Used For Now?

Today, this garden is a living history exhibit and seed source, and no longer is used for making medicines. Modern research has shown a few of these plants do contain active chemicals with significant medicinal value, while others contain toxic compounds that are harmful or even fatal. Still other plants are harmless but nutritious, and continue to be used today as food or flavorings.

That Plant Doesn't Look Like...

From historic records we know this garden changed seasonally and over time, but exactly how is uncertain. The map inside shows what plants were growing in each bed on June 24, 1761. Since many of these plants are annuals, they are removed at the end of their growing season and the beds re-planted with other period medicinal plants or protective cover crops. Labeled stakes at the end of each bed indicate what is growing there currently.

Help Us Keep the Garden Beautiful!

The medical garden is maintained by volunteers who want to keep this educational and historic resource thriving. If you would like to become a medical garden volunteer, or have other questions, contact Ellen Kutcher, Park Director, at 336-924-8191.

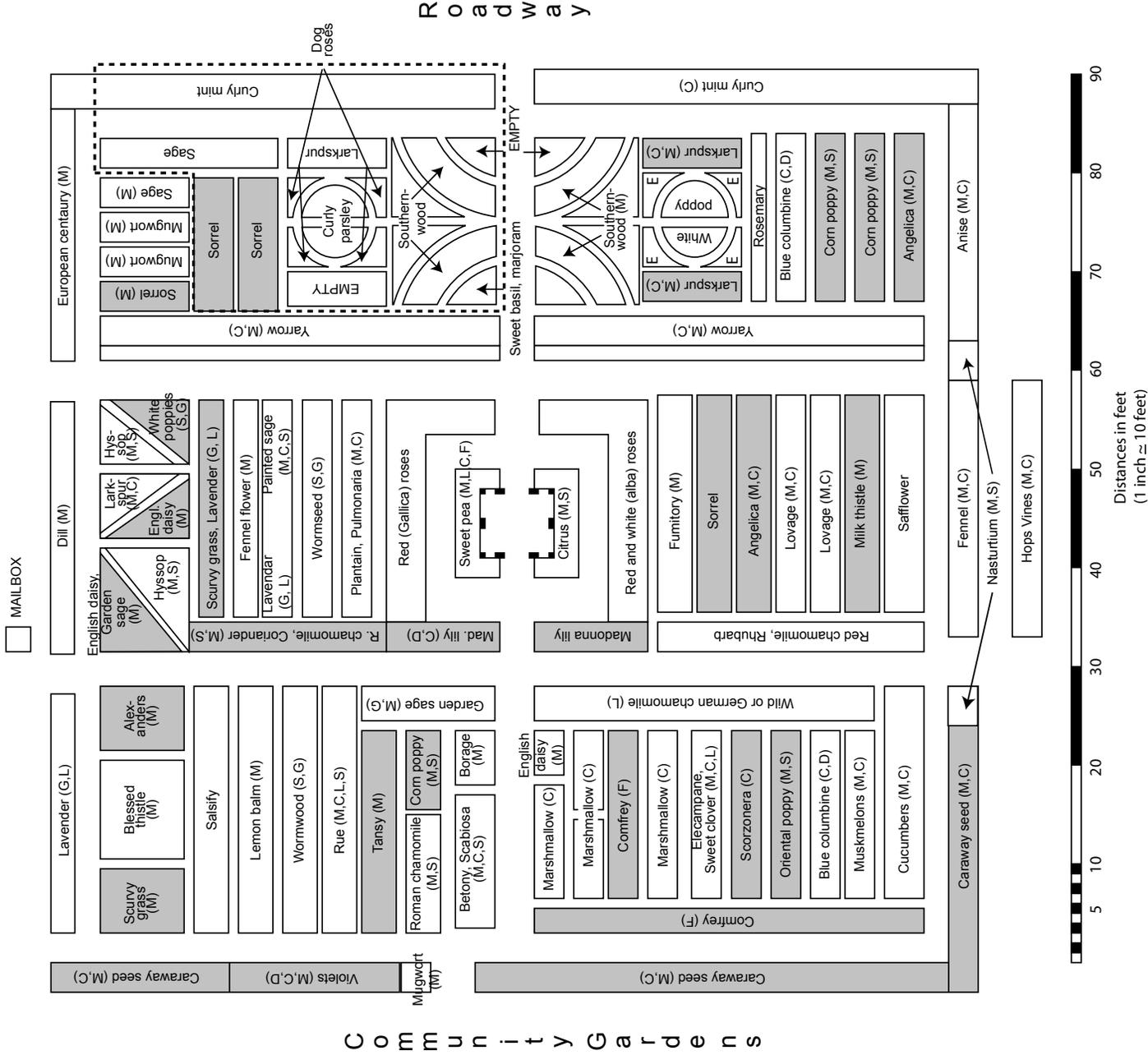
Guide to the Moravian Medical Garden

Dan Johnson, Ph.D. & Bev Nesbit, M.A.



Medicinal Garden of Bethabara with Modern Plant Names

North



PLEASE do not pick or remove plants!

If you are interested in any of our plants, we are happy to help you find seeds or sources for everything we grow.