

Afton Villa Gardens



Historic Afton Villa Gardens Continues the Conservation and Preservation of the 19th Century Garden with a Historic Preservation Fund Grant from the LA Division of Historic Preservation, Office of Cultural Development and the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

ST. FRANCISVILLE, LA (PRESS RELEASE), January 25, 2025, Afton Villa Gardens is pleased to announce that it is a recipient of a Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Grant Award to conduct Historic America Landscape Survey (HALS) documentation of the extensive 200+ acre property that will enable the continued conservation and preservation of this historic Louisiana garden. Each year the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation, Office of Cultural Development, distributes an allocation of sub-grants for preservation and archaeological projects through a competitive process with funds from the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service (NPS). Afton Villa Gardens was awarded \$58,935, in 2024, to document the site.

Although the Afton Villa estate house fell victim to a devastating fire in 1963, the garden features remain and are open for public use. Afton Villa Gardens, located in St. Francisville, Louisiana, is a historic garden dating from the mid-19th century and ranked the second most beautiful garden in Louisiana in December 2023. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1983 by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The twelve-month HALS project will be conducted under the direction of Dr. Lake Douglas, FASLA, professor emeritus, LSU Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture, and Duplantis Design Group of Baton Rouge. Dr. Douglas has published widely in the area of landscape history of the Gulf South, including *Public Spaces Private Gardens: A History of Designed Landscape in New Orleans* and *Steward of the Land*. He edits a series for LSU Press that has published Genevieve Munson Trimble's *Afton Villa: The Birth and Rebirth of a Nineteenth-Century Louisiana Garden* and *Charting the Plantation Landscape from Natchez to New Orleans*. HALS documentation of Afton Villa Gardens will include research and digitization of historic documents related to the Afton Villa property, measured drawings of site features, and a historical report of the property's evolution from its 19th century beginnings to the present day. HALS is a federal program within the NPS charged with creating a permanent, publicly accessible record of significant cultural and designed landscapes in the United States and its territories. When completed, the documents will be housed in the Library of Congress.

For information about HALS, see <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritagedocumentation/hals.htm>

**Contact: Fred Corle - 703-508-9773 fred_corle@aftonvillagardens.com Afton
Villa Gardens, 9347 Highway 61, St. Francisville, LA 70775**