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PEGGY SINGLEMANN ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT FROM MAYMONT FOUNDATION AFTER NEARLY FOUR DECADES LEADING PARK OPERATIONS AND HORTICULTURE

Richmond, Virginia – After a distinguished 38-year career with Maymont, Peggy Singlemann, Director of Park Operations and Horticulture, will retire from Maymont Foundation on June 30, 2022.

Singlemann joined the Maymont Foundation in 1984, after working in various roles in commercial greenhouses and nurseries, and a one-year stint as a bank teller, which she credits for confirming her preference for a career working outdoors with the natural environment. Over the next three decades, Singlemann rose to become a member of the core leadership team, along with Associate Executive Director Fred Murray and Dale Wheary, Director of Historical Collections and Programs, who collaborated to develop and implement a plan to restore the historic estate to its original splendor 50 years after Maymont was founded.

“Peggy has been a major driving force behind the renewal and restoration of this magnificent 100-acre estate,” said Parke Richeson, Maymont Executive Director. “She cultivated a culture of stewardship and appreciation for the historic landscape of Maymont that has inspired countless volunteers and staff over the decades to take as much pride as she does in caring for this amazingly authentic and unique treasure for our community.”

In nearly four decades at Maymont, Singlemann has designed, planted and maintained historic and specialty gardens, including the formal Italian Garden, the Japanese Garden, Marie’s Butterfly Trail, Jack’s Vegetable Garden, The Robins Nature Center native plant landscape, numerous annual and perennial borders, and overseen the care of an award-winning arboretum that encompasses several state and national champion trees.

“I really have to give credit to the many devoted volunteers who have contributed their time, labor and creativity to help keep Maymont looking its best, and raise funds to keep it going strong,” Singlemann said. “I couldn’t be any prouder of the way Maymont looks today, and I know it will continue to thrive under the stewardship of this wonderful team of people who love it as much as I do.”

From the beginning, Singlemann scoured archives for historic photographs and documentation to understand the estate’s original plant material and layout, much of which had become overgrown with invasive plants or had been altered in the years after the Dooleys. She established the first Woody Plants Collection Policy to define the planting guidelines for trees and shrubs. She instituted best practices gleaned from studying other historical estates, joined professional horticulture, landscape and garden history organizations, and earned multiple professional certifications and recognition for her work.

Singlemann has also overseen several major building and renovation projects, including the recent renovation of The Robins Nature Center in 2019 and the conversion of the historic home at 1000 Westover into an office and event space. This year she is wrapping up another major construction project for the interior renovation and conversion of the Stone Barn into a new Orientation and Learning Center.

Along the way, Singlemann helped design and launch several major community fundraising events, including Herbs Galore & More and Garden Glow. In addition, she's forged strong relationships with supportive organizations including Ikebana of Richmond Inc., local garden clubs, and state and national garden and horticulture organizations.

In future, Peggy plans to continue to share her extensive knowledge of gardening and landscape management as host of "Virginia Home Grown," produced by Virginia Public Media, as well as through writing and speaking engagements, and looks forward to traveling and spending more time with her family.

Maymont is a well-preserved, historic 100-acre American estate overlooking the James River that was given to the public by James and Sallie Dooley, who lived there from 1893 to 1925. Today, Maymont is a welcoming community gathering place, with many unique experiences for all to enjoy, including the historic Maymont Mansion, The Robins Nature Center, an arboretum, formal gardens, and habitats for native Virginia wildlife and farm animals. Consistently ranked one of Central Virginia's top attractions by travelers and locals alike, Maymont serves over 800,000 guests annually, with free admission to the grounds, plus guided and self-guided tours, seasonal events, programs and rental spaces. Since 1975, Maymont has been maintained and operated by the nonprofit Maymont Foundation, committed to creating programs and experiences that delight, educate and inspire its guests.

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Note to editors: Photos are available upon request to mabernathy@maymont.org.