

Landscape Restoration

Thomas Jefferson was a skilled landscape designer, blending architecture and garden elements into a seamless composition. He surrounded his retreat house with five acres of ornamental grounds using planting elements inspired by both English and French garden designs.

Jefferson's original landscape design is being created before visitors' eyes through careful archaeological research. Through excavations identifying planting holes and features such as ornamental beds, and sophisticated research of microscopic pollen grains, our team has been replanting trees and shrubs in the exact locations where Jefferson had them planted more than 200 years ago.

The restoration of the ornamental plantings on the north side of Jefferson's villa to their Jefferson-era appearance has been fully completed, including the double row of paper mulberry trees between the house and west mound; two circular clumps of trees at the corners of the house; three oval beds, containing roses and flowering shrubs; and the restored carriage turnaround surface. These landscape restoration projects were generously supported by the Garden Club of Virginia, the Institute of Museum and Library Services and other funders.

An ongoing project, future plans are to restore the south side of the retreat landscape as well as to move farther out on the plantation to locate and restore other sites.