

HISTORY MAKER

FRANZ "FRANK" JOSEF LUSTIG

Born: Sept. 26, 1905, Höchstberg, Heilbronn, Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Died: March 20, 1986, Winston-Salem, N.C.

Known for: The gardens and landscape of Tanglewood Park, which he established and maintained from inception until his death.

Frank Lustig transformed William and Kate Reynolds' 1,100-acre estate from wilderness to graceful lawns, magical outdoor spaces and fragrant horticultural treasures. He established the extensive rose garden and arboretum.

Fresh from Germany and just 23 years old when hired, he served as the anchor for several of his siblings to immigrate. They were listed as gardeners at Tanglewood in 1930 but moved to New York soon after.

Frank never left. He oversaw the landscaping and gardens until his death at 80.

Born in rural southwestern Germany, he was the 11th of 12 children born to Franz Karl and Helena Lustig.

Like many others, he came to America in hopes of a better economic future in 1928, settling first in Kentucky, where he worked as a florist. By October of that year, William Reynolds hired him to bring his wife's ambitious vision for their "Tanglewood Farm" to reality.

The Reynoldses had already worked with the state Department of Agriculture and planted 10,000 pine trees on 40 acres.

Lustig arrived to a property that lived up to its name. He walked the grounds to identify plants, remove deadwood and overgrowth and identify locations for various uses.

Some, like the amphitheater, would become beautiful vignettes where guests lounged, or where family weddings and



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Frank Lustig, the gardener at Tanglewood Park, with his wife, Edith, in 1951.

garden parties were held. Others were developed into useful pasture for "Mr. Will's" herd of angora fainting goats or for his real passion, the stable of prized standardbred racehorses.

The country home served a deliberate and oft-used role in Reynolds' business dealings, tobacco and racing. State newspapers reported gatherings of executives or racing officials where guests played golf, enjoyed luncheons, and, of course, rode horses.

The couple willed the estate to the county to be used as a public park in 1951, and Frank continued as the estate's gardener. Thirty years after his death, his name was still used as a marketing point when the park held plant sales.

After 58 years, the property was so much a part of him that he petitioned the county for permission to be buried there. The petition was granted. He, his wife and their daughter are buried at the small white Methodist church at the park.