

# The Garden Club of New Haven

*Celebrating One Hundred Years*

ROOTED IN HISTORY

PLANTED IN THE PRESENT

BRANCHING INTO THE FUTURE



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Dedicated to the memory of Carol F. Ross, a member  
of the Garden Club of New Haven from 2005 to 2025  
and president from 2009 to 2011

*Dux femina facti*

[A woman was the leader of the action]

—Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.364

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## Introduction

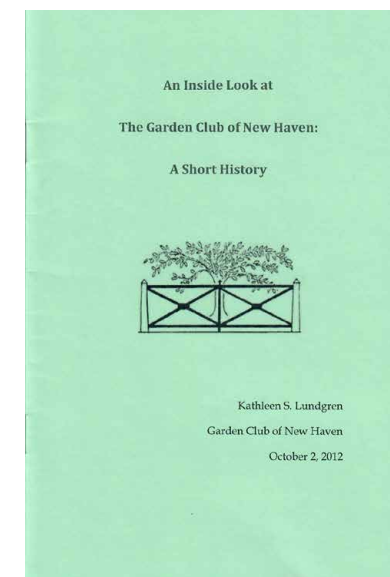
The Garden Club of New Haven's Centennial, a yearlong celebration, reflects the club's core mission for the past one hundred years. This is a time for proud reflection on our achievement-filled past and happy anticipation of all we can do in the future. This is also an opportunity to recognize and salute our many civic partners in the New Haven community.

That the Garden Club of New Haven has been able to stay relevant and resilient over these past ten decades is a testament to the integrity, diligence, and farsightedness of each and every one of our members. During our centennial year, we salute that spirit—past, present, and future.

The text for this publication has been thoroughly researched, adapted, and compiled by member Kathleen S. Lundgren, who updated her short history of the club, *An Inside Look at the Garden Club of New Haven*, published in 2012. We are very grateful to her.

Susan Ehrenkranz

*Past President; Co-Chair of the Centennial Committee*





# The First Century of the Garden Club of New Haven

1924–34

## *Sowing the Seeds*

Just months before the Garden Club of New Haven held its first meeting in 1924, several New Haven women led by Florence Bradley had taken a drive to “Woodbridge and other surrounding towns to admire the gardens and trees of the countryside.”<sup>1</sup> As they drove, these friends talked about the importance of natural beauty and about their love of gardening and whether it could be shared with others in New Haven. They decided it could. They envisioned a club that would allow them to further develop that love and do more active gardening within the city. They also hoped to promote civic, horticultural, and conservation work in New Haven in an organized way. Within months, this small cohort had gathered fifty other like-minded women at the New Haven Country Club in October for the first meeting of what would become the Garden Club of New Haven.

Very quickly, plans were developed to build the club’s membership, structure its finances, design its bylaws, and introduce it to the city of New Haven. On June 23, 1925, members held their first public event—a formal Flower Show at the New Haven Free Public Library. Handwritten notes describe members’ thoughts on lighting, floor plans, and even “how [to] fasten fireplaces to the wall.” Building upon the show’s success, the club arranged a Tulip Show in 1926, described

<sup>1</sup> All quotations not otherwise attributed are taken directly from Minutes of the Garden Club of New Haven for those dates.

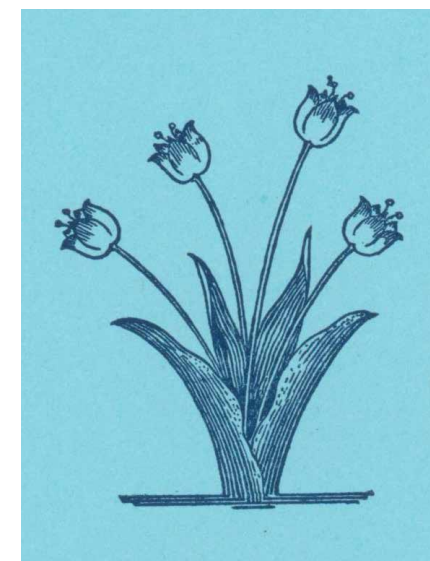
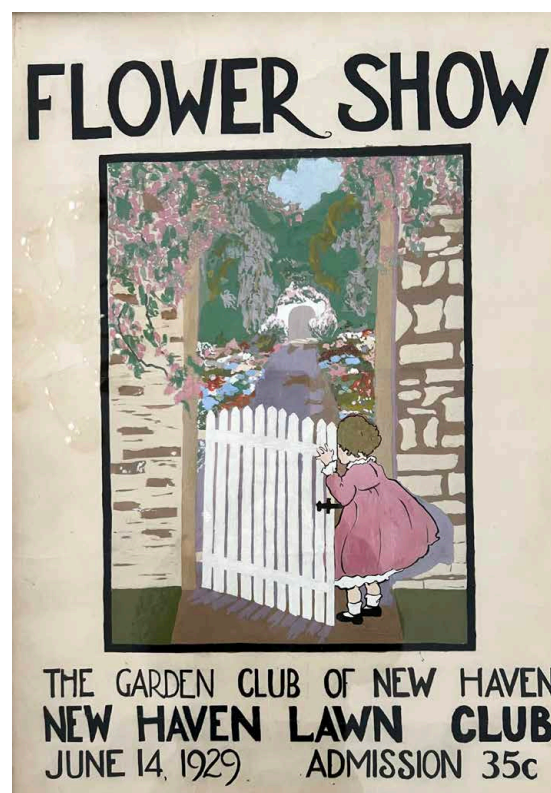


**FLORENCE ISADORA JUDSON BRADLEY** was the first president of the Garden Club of New Haven. She was born on May 17, 1869, and died on November 27, 1944. She is buried at the Grove Street Cemetery, in plot 61 on Maple Street alongside her husband, Arthur Bradley.

Research reveals that Florence was a creative, observant, and sensitive woman devoted to her church and to the environment. She wrote scores for the piano and organ to accompany communion meditations, and several of her hymns are preserved in *The New Christian Hymnal*.

In a letter of admiration and good wishes that she wrote to Helen Keller from her home at 47 Livingston Street, Florence revealed much about herself. She began the letter by expressing her pleasure at having met Miss Keller and went on to describe her devotion toward her church, her fondness for pets, and her enthusiasm for drawing and design. The letter ends with her artistic remarks on the beauty of an oak leaf.

as a “thrilling experiment in every way.” However, the expenses incurred, \$23.39, a significant sum in 1926, were daunting. Though tulip shows would be infrequent in the years following, flower shows became annual events [below]. Despite—or perhaps because of—the Great Depression, attendance during the 1930s was high, with the Flower Show of 1931, for example, welcoming well over a thousand visitors. In 1933 the Flower Show, now described as the Flower Exhibit, ambitiously extended to two days. But spring came with high temperatures that year, and the exhibits displayed on the first day drooped and wilted. On the morning of the second day, resourceful





members “set their alarms to rise early” and replaced all of the damaged flowers with “literally bushels of flowers” freshly cut from their own gardens.

For the New Haven club and clubs around the country, planning and arranging flower shows became a central focus of garden club life. However, connections between clubs and the benefits of such regional alliances were important as well.<sup>2</sup> In 1927 the Garden Club of New Haven initiated plans to form Connecticut’s State Federation of Garden Clubs, which was officially established in 1929. The newly formed organization put out a call for a logo, and a member of the New Haven club whose name is lost in time designed the winning seal, which was used for many decades. The federation is now known as the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut [above], and the Garden Club of New Haven has remained a leader in the organization since its inception.

<sup>2</sup> At the time, the Garden Club of America, which incorporated in 1913, was limited to its twelve founding clubs.



## 1934–44 *Branching Out*

Civic activity was important in the early years of the club, and the members’ most visible effort was the planting of dogwoods on the Boulevard (now Ella T. Grasso Boulevard) when the Public Works Administration and the New Haven Road Construction Company opened this avenue in 1934 [above]. This beautification project marked the club’s tenth anniversary.

The club’s first major civic planting project, however, was the design and planting of the Pardee Rose Garden in 1935. The city of New Haven had received 150 rosebushes from a Texas rose grower, which were quickly passed on to the Garden Club of New Haven. Perhaps the number of plants, the requirement that they be put in the ground with some haste, and the need for an extensive landscape plan overwhelmed the city and the Parks Department, but the project did not faze the Garden Club. Our members, women of indomitable spirit, accepted the roses gladly and began the planning and design work.



The original garden was symmetrical with one central row of arches dividing beds that contained forty-six varieties of roses [above]. A plaque was installed that read:

Pardee Rose Garden  
Planted and maintained under  
the Will and Bequest of William Scranton Pardee  
of this city as a  
lasting memorial of his mother,  
Nancy Maria English Pardee

The garden flourished and became a popular tourist destination, and the Yale College Class of 1882 (Mr. Pardee's graduating class) always made a pilgrimage to the site during their reunions to both marvel at the beauty of the garden and remember Billie, as William Pardee was called.

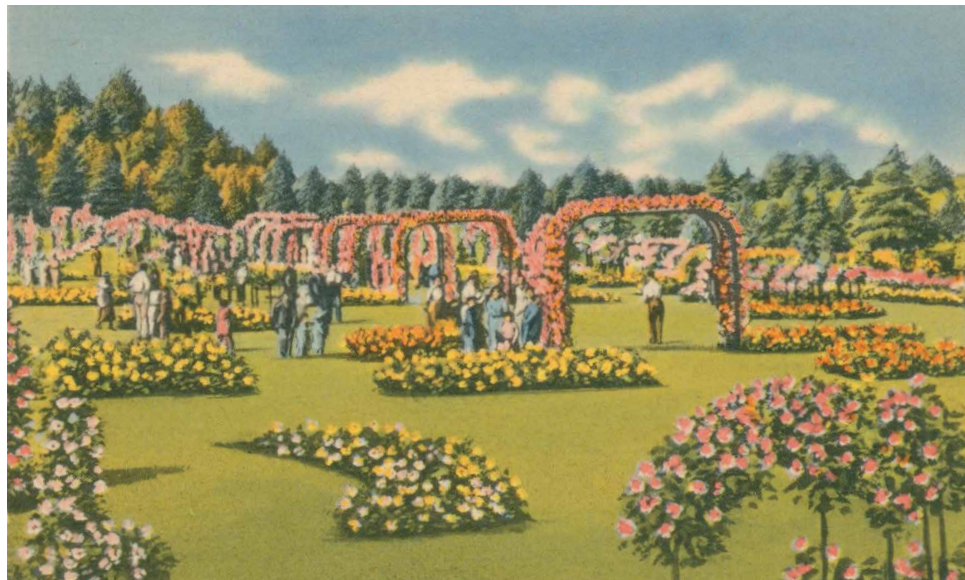
By the end of the 1930s, the club's planting efforts throughout the city were garnering some attention. In early 1940, life still seemed predictable, although the threat of war was having an effect on individuals and organizations all over the country. But the club had incorporated, and its visibility in the local newspaper, the *New*



THE PARDEE ROSE GARDEN, GREENHOUSE, AND CENTER are located at 180 Park Road in Hamden, at the northeast corner of New Haven's East Rock Park. They are maintained by the New Haven Department of Parks and Public Works.

Funding was provided in a bequest to New Haven from William Scranton Pardee in 1922; but it was the arrival of 150 rosebushes from a Texas grower in 1935 that led to the realization of the garden itself. The Garden Club of New Haven was engaged to design and plant the original garden, which was symmetrical in design, with a long central row of arches dividing beds that contained forty-six varieties of roses, including hybrid tea, polyantha, hybrid perpetual, climbers, and old garden roses.

Today, the two-acre rose garden is in bloom from early spring until mid-fall. It holds seventy-six varieties, 1,500 bushes in all, and includes many new varieties along with some of the originals. The climbing roses "Cecile Brunner" and "American Pillar" [shown here] are two that have been replanted in honor of the original plan.



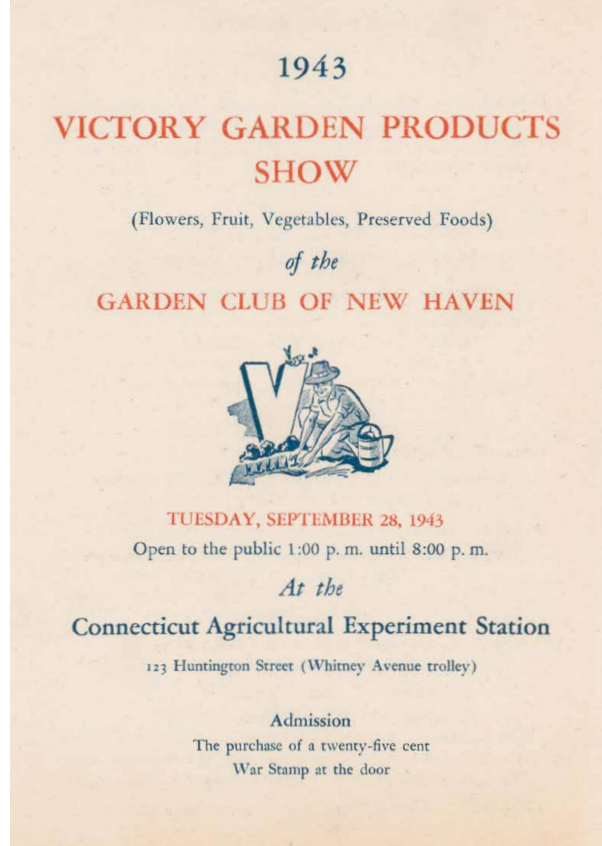
Three views of the Pardee Rose Garden



*Haven Register*, was rapidly increasing. In May of that year, the *Register* focused on the club's work to remove billboards throughout Connecticut and applauded the club's contributions to "conservation, education and a more beautiful New Haven."

By November 1940, much had changed. Blackouts were occurring nightly, and life was now almost fully focused on the war. In response, the club voted to establish a War Relief Committee, and all members were asked to participate. For the duration of the war, members met once a week to do "war work which included making garments" to be sent overseas. In 1941 the club's members began to participate as well in Red Cross meetings.

Simultaneous with the war efforts, though, were efforts to continue developing the club. Flower arranging and horticulture



were pursued, although the purpose and focus had shifted. Members now planned all activities to directly and immediately impact the community. Small floral arrangements were delivered weekly to the New Haven Hospital (now Yale New Haven Hospital) where, in addition to city patients, soldiers were being admitted and treated for war wounds. Horticulture and civic work began to focus on Victory Gardens. By 1942, vegetables rather than flowers were being planted, and the schedule of talks on flower arrangements was “given up” in favor of lectures on “Defense Gardens.” Members were regularly asked to donate blood, and did. The business of nominating slates as well as other procedural club business was continued, but “all other projects were suspended for the duration of the War.” The Garden Committee, now known as the War Garden Committee, focused on working with schoolchildren to grow vegetables, the seeds of which the club sent to Britain and Europe.

In the autumn of 1943, the club held a Victory Garden Show that showcased fruits and vegetables [above]. The price of admission?

### STAMPING OUT THE ENEMY: U.S. WAR SAVINGS STAMPS



War stamps were first issued in 1917 by the United States Treasury to help fund the country’s participation in World War I and relieve the debt that the nation had incurred. War stamps were distinct from postal saving stamps issued by the U.S. Post Office, but the Post Office did play a major role in promoting and distributing them. In contrast to Liberty Bonds, which were primarily purchased by financial institutions, war savings stamps were principally aimed at individual citizens, allowing everyone to support the war effort, both ideologically and financially. The primary message was one of patriotism.

Encouraged by the successful campaign of the 1910s and ’20s, in late 1942 the country once again issued war stamps, promoting them in five denominations: 10 cents, 25 cents, 50 cents, one dollar, and five dollars. Each stamp featured the Minuteman statue designed by artist/sculptor Daniel Chester French and representing the citizen soldier of 1775. This image was well known and distinctly American, embodying the ideal of average citizens playing a part in the defense of the nation.

The stamps were purchased at face value and earned no interest. The goal

for each purchaser was to accumulate the stamps in collection booklets, which, when filled, could be converted to purchase Series E war bonds. Numerous marketing efforts were developed to target different populations, and the Treasury Department even produced classroom materials that highlighted the positive impact of collecting war savings stamps, while, at the same time, reinforcing math skills.

War stamps permeated everyday life. Advertisements appeared as posters on trolley cars, as songs on the radio, and in movies featuring such Hollywood stars as Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra. There was even a poster depicting Joan of Arc with raised sword and the exhortation “Women of America / Save Your Country / Buy War Savings Stamps”!

A war stamp. Following the show, members and visitors were asked to send whatever they could spare from their own gardens to the military hospital. The show was a success, but in the months following, and as the war continued, enthusiasm in the club began to wane. Women everywhere became more focused on the war effort and concerns at home. Requests for attendance at meetings were sent out to members, and requirements for membership—attendance at all general meetings, participation on one or more committees, and payment of annual dues—were softened.

For those women who did attend meetings, discussions included a nod toward maintaining club activities, but the strong focus was on the club's involvement in war work. In a continued effort to promote meaningful activities, there was a shift toward emphasizing the benefits of flower arranging as a therapeutic activity. Rather than spending time on elaborate flower arrangements, a method for displaying beautiful bouquets that could be done in “minutes” was taught, with the goal that these small, quick arrangements would brighten a house or a hospital bedside table. Meanwhile, the War Garden Committee began to research and report on “edible weeds” that could help address continued food shortages. In the spring of 1944, members opened their gardens to men and women in the military as another welcome form of therapy.

## 1944–54

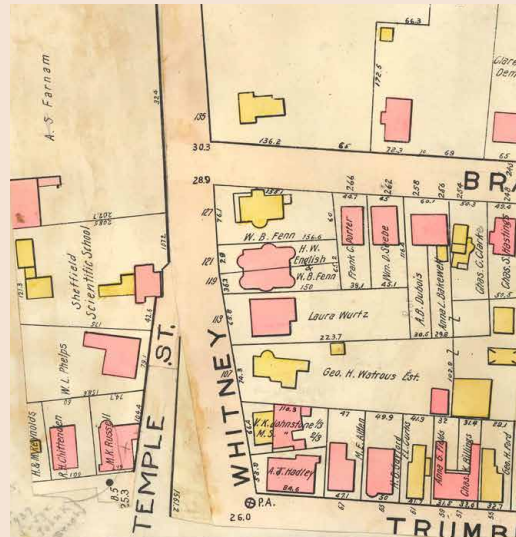
### *Digging In, Shifting the Focus*

Members shared a small birthday cake to commemorate the club's twentieth anniversary in the spring of 1944. At the end of the year, the tradition of bringing a bit of cheer during the holidays began when members gave stockings to disabled veterans at Christmas.

The club's focus was on children now, and the Junior Garden Club of New Haven for girls aged 11–14 years was established. Together, women and girls worked to beautify the Boulevard, and anyone who could “spare the gas” was encouraged to drive out to see the new plantings. Additionally, members gave birdsong recordings to soldiers who had been blinded. The Conservation Committee focused on “buckling down” and strongly recommended that members “think about [over] consuming our natural resources” not just during war, but afterward, as well. Their foresight was striking.

Club minutes do not record the war's end, but in the autumn of 1945 most activities involved continued conservation efforts to deal with scarcities. The first recorded acknowledgment that the war was over was dated January 1946, when the club received an award from the New Haven Hospital for its members' volunteer work.

As people looked to a peaceful future, life gradually returned to a normal, familiar rhythm, and members who had withdrawn from the club began to request reinstatement. Whereas members had previously sent war relief seeds to Europe, they now sent “Seeds of Peace.” In addition, the club's commitment to the Red Cross and involvement with Junior Gardeners would continue for another few years. But with the “war over,” members voted that henceforth resources be devoted to work more closely related to the Garden Club mission. Speakers gave talks on the horticulture of South America and Mexico. Gardens once again bloomed with flowers rather than vegetables, and study groups were formed to create floral designs that not only reflected beauty but also demanded precision. Clear design principles were



For decades, PHELPS TRIANGLE PARK has been a favorite neighborhood relaxation spot in the heart of New Haven. The combination of mature trees, lush undergrowth, and symmetrical planting scheme creates an atmosphere of serenity, making it an appealing green oasis among the surrounding buildings and a popular venue for lunch meetings and casual visits.

The park came into existence in 1824 when Temple Street was extended to Whitney Avenue, creating an island at the intersection with Trumbull Street. This triangle of land was donated to the city in 1850 by the heirs of the Hillhouse Estate. The property was renamed Phelps Triangle Park in 1943 in honor of the prominent Yale literature professor William Lyon Phelps, whose gambrel-roofed, brick house faced the triangle [left].

In 1949 the park was drab and undeveloped. The Garden Club of New Haven offered to design a planting plan, transform the space into a community mini-park, and maintain it. On Arbor Day, April 25, 1952, seven elms, eleven yews, and three white dogwoods, with a central lawn and flower beds full of bulbs and annual flowers, were planted.

By 1969, Dutch elm disease had killed the elms, and the park had deteriorated. The Garden Club funded a

new landscape plan, purchased all the plantings and design elements, and oversaw the transformation of the space into a renewed pocket park for the neighborhood. The lawn was eliminated, the center was paved with brick, and plants were selected for pollution resistance.

The planting plan was reviewed again in 2008 and, with the help of landscape architect Amy Sampson and generous support from the Vietor family and Hortense Wilson, new shrubs and vigorous ground covers were installed. Three years later, the Garden Club documented the work that had been done at Phelps Triangle Park over the decades and submitted this research to the Smithsonian Institution for inclusion in its historical garden archives.

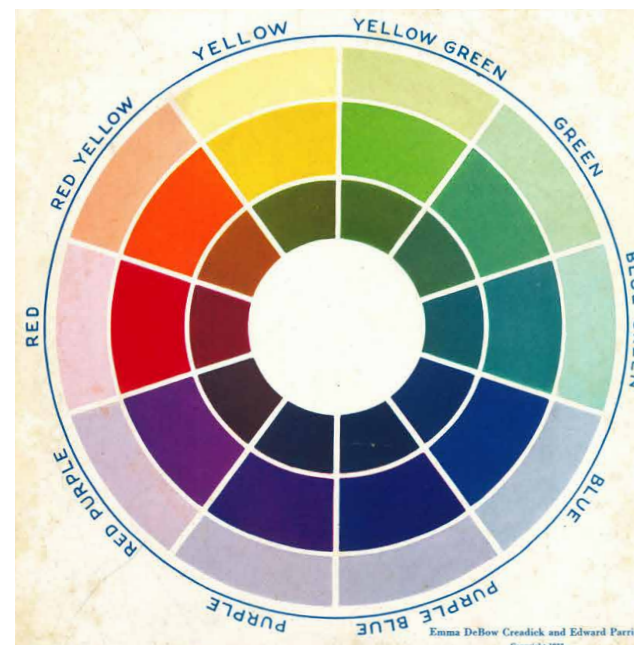
Garden Club members spend about 200 hours annually on weeding, pruning, mulching, deadheading, raking, litter pickup, fertilization, and planting as needed. Members also devote one day each autumn to installing burlap along the fence to protect the plants from winter damage. The burlap is removed in early spring when the annual club gardening cycle begins again.

established, and arrangements now required the six elements of balance, dominance, contrast, rhythm, proportion, and scale. Flower shows were returning, too, with the first postwar show of May 21, 1947, deemed a great success. Another was held in May 1948 and a third in May 1949. An important annual tradition had been reestablished.

The club also reinvented itself in political issues related to conservation. The first movement was the creation of a write-in campaign supporting a Soil Conservation Bill before the House in Hartford, Connecticut; the second was the return of the club's Billboard Committee. The Civic Committee refocused its attention on the possibility of developing what was then called the "Whitney Avenue Triangle" (now Phelps Triangle); members actively worked with teachers and children to demonstrate the importance of soil; and the hospital was a regular recipient of both plants and arrangements.

During the late 1940s, the club turned its attention to its own infrastructure, examining its membership requirements and its finances, which were operating at a deficit. Members were active and enthusiastic, applications to join were strong, and there was increased interest in learning about horticulture, conservation, and beautification. The minutes reflected the need to tighten membership requirements, however. Going forward, unexcused absences resulted in lost membership, and all members were required to exhibit at the upcoming flower show or face suspension!

By 1949 club records indicate that the efforts to revise, alter, and improve the internal structures were well spent. Membership had increased, spending was carefully monitored, and a financial surplus had been achieved. Additionally, the board announced to the membership its "acquisition of a silver tea service to be owned by the Club." The International Silver Camille pattern became a part of the Garden Club hospitality tradition. Only four years after the war, the club was on firm footing. With this good news and in an effort to continue its financial success, the board strongly suggested that the club establish a new committee that could spearhead fundraising activities. Going forward, at each flower show, the club held a sale of



some gardening-related item. "Color Charts" were the first venture in this new budget-balancing pursuit [above]. While some gardeners might balk at the constrictions imposed by a color chart, the club revived the chart that it had developed in the late 1920s, and members enthusiastically bought, used, and sold them.

In 1952 the Garden Club of America (GCA) expanded membership beyond its twelve founding clubs and welcomed the application of the Garden Club of New Haven, which continued to grow through its connections and alliances. A massive International Garden Show, supported by both the Federated Clubs and the GCA, was held in the old Coliseum in downtown New Haven. Its theme was "outdoor living staged within a walled garden in the theme of 'Little Old New York.'"



1954–64

## *Propagating Community Relationships*

Much work was done in the 1950s on the Green, in East Rock Park, and on the mall at Edgewood. The *New Haven Register* was once again paying attention to changes throughout the city. The *Register* wrote about the club’s “cultural contributions in seeking a proper balance of nature, soil conservation and park management”; and a speaker from Yale University’s Graduate Program in City Planning told members that their “contributions far surpassed jazz, the Southern novel and the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright”! During these years, the Garden Club further developed a relationship with Yale University by providing floral arrangements for its special events.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the club was fully committed to flower shows, garden tours [see p. 28], conservation, and education through a speaker series and workshops. But elm trees [left] increasingly informed the agenda, as the club dedicated itself to reviving the trees on the Green that had given New Haven its post-Civil War nickname, “the Elm City.” In much of the nineteenth century, the Green had been populated with elms, but by 1910, many of those trees had been removed—destroyed by hurricanes or devastated by Dutch elm disease, a fungus that clogs the elm tree’s water conducting system, causing the tree to die. The Garden Club sought to address the essential need for an urban canopy in our city, planting the corner of Church and Chapel Streets with six majestic elms.

Mid-decade saw the development of a strong political movement to prevent destruction of parks as highway development threatened to take open land for road development. The club’s Conservation Committee reinvigorated itself and became active in the “Open Space Program.”

# A House and Garden Tour

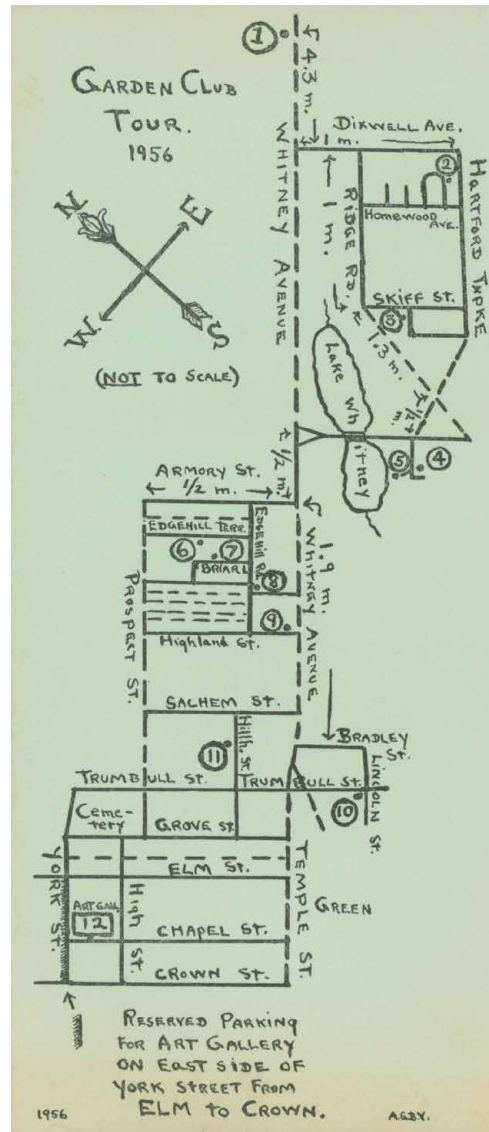
for the benefit of

The Garden Club of  
New Haven



SATURDAY 12 MAY 1956

1:30 to 5:30



DUTCH ELM DISEASE is caused by a member of the sac fungi and is spread by elm bark beetles. Believed to be originally native to Asia, the disease was accidentally introduced into America, Europe, and New Zealand, where it devastated native populations of elms that did not have resistance to disease. The fungus was isolated in 1921 in the Netherlands by Bea Schwartz, a pioneering Dutch phytopathologist, and it is this discovery that lent the disease its name.

The first symptom of infection is usually an upper branch of a tree with leaves starting to wither and yellow in summer months before the normal autumnal shedding. The disease then spreads throughout the tree branches. Eventually the roots die, starved of nutrients from the leaves.

Richard Jefferies, in his book *Nature Near London* (1883), described the disease in this way:

*There is something wrong with elm trees. In the early part of this summer, not long after the leaves were fairly out upon them, here and there a branch appeared as if it had been touched with a red-hot iron and burnt up, all the leaves withered and browned on the boughs. First one tree was affected, then another, then a third, till, looking round the fields, it seemed as if every fourth or fifth tree had thus been burnt.*

Dutch elm disease was first reported in the United States in 1928, when the beetle was believed to have arrived in a shipment

of logs from the Netherlands which were destined for use as a veneer in the Ohio furniture industry. Quarantine and sanitation procedures contained the outbreak to an area of 150 miles around New York City. In 1941, however, war efforts demanded the nation's attention, and the focus turned away from saving the elms.

Dutch elm disease spread from New England, westward and southward, and the devastation was rapid. Of the estimated 77 million elms in North America in 1930, 75 percent had been lost by 1989. Almost all of the trees in New Haven had been destroyed.

The Park Service used various methods to control the epidemic: sanitation, pruning, injecting with fungicide, replanting with resistant cultivars, trapping the beetles, and spraying with insecticides. Many of these efforts proved futile and some, particularly the use of insecticides such as DDT, which were sprayed heavily across all parts of elm trees, led to the death of many bird species.

Alongside these attempts to eradicate the disease, researchers worked to discover resistant cultivars. Their early efforts did produce resistant trees, but those trees lacked the traditional shape and landscape value of the American elm, and few were planted. Thanks to dogged scientific research, diligence, and determination, however, ten resistant American elm cultivars have been identified and are now in commerce in North America.

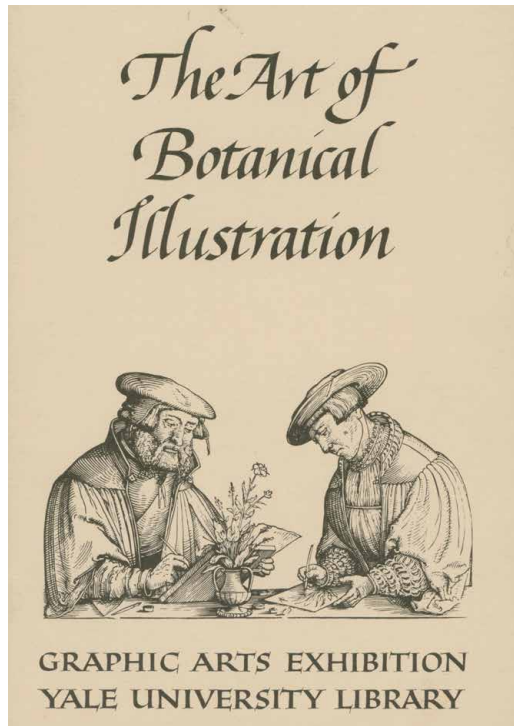


1964–74

### *Gardening with Social Significance*

The club of 1965 determined to showcase the cultural heritage of New Haven by hosting a walking tour of Hillhouse Avenue houses. According to Mark Twain and Charles Dickens, to walk down Hillhouse Avenue was to experience the most beautiful street in America. Here one could find the best-preserved array of high-style nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century suburban villa architecture—treasures full of amazing furnishings and surrounded by lush, expertly tended gardens [above]. The tour was preceded by a lunch at the New Haven Lawn Club. The *New Haven Register* publicized this effort, and club archival photographs convey the beauty of the homes enhanced by arrangements created by club members and uniquely planned and designed for each space.

These were new times for the country and for New Haven. Gardeners were now focusing on the environment. They understood that personal well-being was linked to air and water pollution, climate change, soil degradation, over-exploitation of natural resources, and the use of pesticides. In a 1967 article, the *Register* proclaimed, “It’s OK to Breathe, Just Don’t Inhale.” The environment and other issues of the late 1960s took center stage for the club, as well. In May it was asked to join with New Haven’s Redevelopment Agency in a project that the *Register* described as the development of “gardening with social significance.” The club’s Civic Committee exemplified what the *Register* described as an “established practice of the Club which works diligently for the betterment of the community.” Projects on the Hill, in Phelps Triangle, and at City Hall [above], as well as the distribution to homeowners of daffodil and tulip bulbs, were cited as examples of the Garden Club contributing to the beautification of New Haven. People recognized the benefits of gardening on their lives. As the



*Register* wrote, “several neighbors [in the Hill Project] have been busy painting and sprucing up their homes and fences” in an expression of civic pride which was stimulated by the work of the Garden Club.

While the Civic Committee was beautifying the city, other committees worked on publishing *The Art of Botanical Illustration* [above] and organizing tours of the Masters’ Houses at Yale. With a nod to the passage of time, lunch was no longer held at the New Haven Lawn Club. Instead, as the *Yale Daily News* reported, more casual “box lunches” were offered before the tour, though they were a bit light: “four bites and the food is gone,” complained one participant. To make up for it, according to the *Daily News*, an anonymous gift of sherry offered to the visitors on the tour “fortified them and sent them back for an afternoon on the trail.” Prominently displayed in the club’s archives is the 1968 photograph of the “Sherry Table,” a gift to the Garden Club from an unknown friend.



As the decade closed, other photographs vividly highlight the beautiful arrangements found on the tours of the Masters’ Houses. But in 1970, these photographs juxtapose stunning, formal arrangements with young visitors to the show, sporting long hair, jeans, and T-shirts. This was the cultural change to which the club would now respond with seeming ease. With a calm, accepting, and democratic air, members entitled that year’s flower show “Flowers in the Public Eye—Give Pleasure in Many Ways.” And they did. Their young visitors are happily seen enjoying the beauty of the show.

The 1970s also saw the foundational work for many of the club’s current civic projects. Phelps Triangle was dedicated as a mini-park in New Haven, the Flag Court at Fort Nathan Hale underwent restoration, and West Rock Nature Center [above] was naturalized. Throughout the city’s neighborhoods, other projects were undertaken, including mini-parks on Orchard and Audubon Streets.

“BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION is a genre of art that endeavours to faithfully depict and represent the form, colour and detail of a plant, identifiable to species or cultivar level....

The best botanical illustration successfully combines scientific accuracy with visual appeal. It must portray a plant with the precision and level of detail for it to be recognised and distinguished from another species.”

—The Royal Horticultural Society<sup>1</sup>

Botanical illustration is always a true and lifelike representation of a plant. It should highlight a plant’s particular distinguishing features, which enable botanists to tell one plant from another. Wendy Hollender, botanical illustrator, instructor, and author, describes her approach as follows:

*As a botanical illustrator, I don't simply copy how a plant looks but must explain plants through my drawing. Botanical illustrations must reveal a plant's morphological structure such as the arrangement of reproductive parts, leaves, and stems with a three dimensional [sic] quality.*

*Botanical illustration attracts and compels us. A pretty flower is not just a pretty flower, it has a specific purpose: to attract a pollinator. The flower's visual appeal comes from colorful markings and its enticing scent lures the pollinator to the nectar within.*

*The scientific study of plants is essential for dealing with environmental changes, containing the spread of invasive plants, and saving endangered species, all issues addressed through botanical illustration....*

*What I find most alluring about botanical art is its seductive quality—drawing me in, feeding my desire to linger inside the mysterious center of the flower, looking through its leaves to another flower like an insect fluttering from blossom to blossom. Imbued with beauty and color, the botanical illustration seduces and attracts.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> See <https://rhs.org.uk/education-learning/pdf/Libraries/exhibiting/botanical-illustration-exhibitor-factsheet.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Wendy Hollender, in “The Science of Art—Why Botanical Illustration Matters,” National Tropical Botanical Garden (June 28, 2019), online at <https://ntbg.org/news/the-science-of-art-why-botanical-illustration-matters>.



1974–84

## *Re-Greening the City Canopy*

By the 1980s, the treasury had increased, and the club was now able to grant money to fund special projects. An award of \$1,000 was given to Schooner, Inc., to support its programs teaching students about ecosystems and the marine environment. The club had come a very long way since the 1940s when it ran a deficit.

In 1983, a major civic project to put elm trees back in the Elm City was initiated [right]. Substantial monies were raised from club members and city philanthropists, 120 elms were planted on the Green (the largest number since James Hillhouse planted the original trees in colonnade fashion on the perimeter of the Green in 1798), and a perpetuity maintenance endowment fund was established at the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. This fund, created by visionary leaders, achieved its \$100,000 goal in 1998 and continues to provide the club with an annual dividend for the maintenance, support, and planting of trees on the Green and throughout the city.



“He plants trees  
to benefit another  
generation.”

—Cicero



**BACK BENDING WORK**—To transplant the early spring plants, care and time are taken to protect the tender roots and new shoots. Shown above, Mrs. John Deming of the New Haven Garden Club carefully clears the soil from a Slender Blue Flag.

## OPERATION PLANTLIFT

In the spring of 1978, the Garden Club of New Haven, together with the Milford Garden Club, undertook a project at the Quinnipiac Council of Boy Scouts of America property on New Haven Avenue in Milford, a location known as Old Settlers. They referred to this undertaking as Operation Plantlift, a community effort to rescue rare wildflowers that were threatened by the sale and development of the council's land. The garden clubs were joined by the Park, Beach, and Recreation Commission and the Milford Land Conservation Trust and were encouraged by the support of concerned citizens and environmentalists.

Plans were made to remove these endangered species and transplant them onto Land Trust land, city parks, and other protected sites. April 19 and 26 were designated as digging days, and this back-bending task was accomplished with help from Milford High School's Key Club members as well as undergraduate and graduate students from Southern Connecticut State College (now University).

Many rescued wildflowers were placed in Milford along the nature trail of Beaver Brook, a Land Trust property. Eager to find compatible growing sites in the New Haven area, the Garden



Club contacted Anthony V. Cosenza, chief ranger of the West Rock Nature Recreation Center. This center was part of the extensive New Haven Park system, and Cosenza had been the founder and only director since its inception in 1946. He was very interested in acquiring wildflowers that the center lacked and readily agreed to help, pinpointing new, suitable locations for these desirable plants. Garden Club members were pleased to find such a compatible home for their treasures.

Many members participated in Operation Plantlift. They cleared the soil from the newly emerging early spring plants, protected their tender roots and new shoots, and safely transplanted them to West Rock. Species that were removed and relocated to New Haven included marsh marigold, red trillium, cut-leaved toothwort, bloodroot, slender blue flag, pink azalea, and northern maiden-hair fern.

# Garden club focuses on Elm City Green

By JACKIE TRASK ULRICH Staff Reporter

A gala benefit on May 14 will kick off a year-long drive to raise funds for a Garden Club of New Haven project to beautify the upper New Haven Green.

The garden club, which named the project "Trees — The Flowering of the Green," plans to restore the elm trees along the perimeter of the Green, to establish a mini-arboretum of flowering trees, and to set up a trust fund for their continuing maintenance.

At the benefit — to be held from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Benescke Rare Book and Manuscript Library — Yale University and the proprietors of the Green will join forces with the garden club to stage a cocktail reception and viewing of a new exhibit, entitled "Pleasure Gardens." The exhibit focuses on five centuries of books and manuscripts illustrating the history of gardens.

Each guest will receive a limited-edition print which can be framed. The four-color print of "A select collection of one hundred flowers" by John Edwards is from one of the rare books to be viewed in the exhibit that evening.

The benefit program also will include a preview of the garden club's flower show from 4 to 6 p.m. at the New Haven Colony Historical Society.

Reservations for the benefit will be accepted until the day of the event.

"The benefit is a vehicle for gaining momentum about revitalization," said Sandy Taylor, who is co-chairwoman of the "Trees" project with Barbara Brink.

Although there have been previous beautification projects sponsored by the garden club — the Jean Pope Park on Tower Parkway, the Orchard Street Neighborhood Park, the mini-park in the Audubon Street arts com-

plex and Phelps Triangle on Whitney Avenue — this is the first to involve the entire New Haven community, they said.

Yale University President A. Bartlett Giamatti and Mayor Biagio DiLieto are serving as honorary chairmen of the May 14 benefit, and several community leaders will serve on an advisory board for the "Trees" project.

They include Francis Adams, F. Aldrich Edwards, Frederick G. Fischer, Terry Hoicombe, Lionel S. Jackson Jr., Paul H. Johnson, Richard C. Lee, Herbert H. Pearce, Cheever Tyler III and Frederick E. Walker.

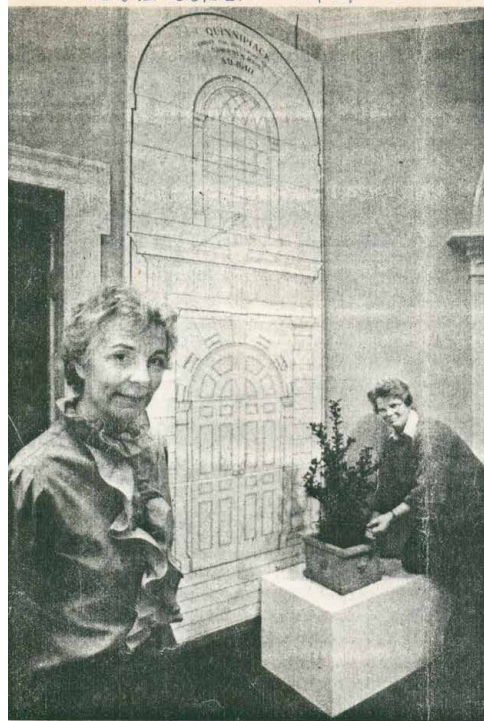
The club's plans to enhance the upper Green will be one of the educational exhibits at the flower show. "Hopefully, what is planted in the mini-arboretum will provide color for at least six months of the year in the form of flowers, berries and foliage," said Jan Sleeper, president of the garden club. "Even in the winter, the variety of textures to the trees and of limb structures will create additional interest."

The establishment of the maintenance fund is equally important," she added. "In the past, trees have died and gone by the wayside. We want to set aside funds not only to maintain them but to replace them when necessary."

Linda Hegel and Joyce Harris, the co-chairwomen of the flower show, have pulled out all the stops for that event, which will be nationally judged by the Garden Club of America.

The show will dramatize the historical significance of the New Haven Green over 300 years. The artistic design classes will reflect such themes as a market place (the first use to which the Green was put back in 1639), the China trade, a picnic on the Green, Yankee ingenuity, open space and

Continued on page 24



Ms. Radford, left, is staging the show, and Ms. Hegel is co-chairwoman.

Staff Photo by GENE GORBLICK

The Journal Courier, May 2, 1983



These elms have grown beautifully, thanks to the club's watchful care. Additionally, club members learned that at the time of their planting, the Elm Research Institute of New Hampshire had provided a local Boy Scout troop with elm seedlings as part of its "Johnny Elmseed" project. The Boy Scouts planted these seeds on a patch of city property, long forgotten, where they had grown into an unruly grove of elms. With the Project Trees Fund, the club arranged for these newly discovered trees to be culled, cleaned, pruned, and in some cases removed, and new disease-resistant seedlings planted as space became available. With foresight, members of the club provided "a source for replacement should the City need to replace or replant more of these majestic trees. And, if any of 'our trees' should be lost through attrition or damaging weather, we, too, will have a source of trees for only the cost of transplanting."

Prior to the club's work in the 1980s, the *New York Times* wrote that "for many decades the Elm City title has been a hollow one." Then, and now, the club has sought to address that.

“But the symbol, the visible symbol, of the current of unity is the Central Square of that nine-square town—the seventeenth-century Market Place, the eighteenth-century Great Square, the elm-shaded Green of the nineteenth century, the welcome ‘open space’ of the twentieth.”

—Rollin G. Osterweis

*The New Haven Green and the American Bicentennial* (1976)



GARDEN CLUB OF NEW HAVEN  
MISSION STATEMENT

“The purpose of this corporation should be to create interest in and promote knowledge of gardening, preservation of natural resources, and civic horticultural work in the Greater New Haven area.”

1984–94

*Strengthening Our Mission*

Flower arranging and civic work continued through the 1990s, but membership was again a concern. Members were aging, younger women were working and raising families, and some members feared the worst—that the Garden Club would be unable to sustain itself. No less than during the war years, however, the club exhibited resilience and flexibility. The Conservation Committee remained actively involved in numerous civic issues and lobbied to influence and change political direction. One of those lobbying efforts in particular reinvigorated the club and its membership, attracting many to focus, with energy and enthusiasm, on an important environmental issue within the community.

In 1991, working at both the city and state levels alongside the New Haven Land Trust, the Garden Club strove to preserve a twenty-two-acre parcel of land bordering Long Island Sound to provide an onsite education program for elementary and middle school children. Their efforts were successful. Once the land was officially deeded to the Land Trust, the area was cleared, a kiosk with panels illustrating marsh, seashore, and harbor flora and fauna was erected, and pathways and bridges were designed. The site, now officially designated as the Long Wharf Nature Preserve, was planted with a variety of salt-tolerant, drought-resistant trees and small shrubs, such as red cedar and viburnum [see pp. 45–46]. This small parcel of land, created by the dredging of Long Island Sound and nestled in the shadow of I-95, has become a natural ecosystem, a respite for migratory birds, and a haven for beachcombers and stargazers.

From its creation, the site has been visited frequently by school groups, and for the first time, the city made the study of New Haven Harbor part of the school curriculum, focusing on the connection between the harbor and downtown. Our “saved” plot of land stands out like a beacon!

THE CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION (CAES) is the oldest state experiment station in the United States, having been founded in 1875. Its official mission is to “develop, advance, and disseminate scientific knowledge, improve agricultural productivity and environmental quality, protect plants, and enhance human health and well-being through research for the benefit of Connecticut residents and the nation.” This state agency has a history of economically and scientifically important discoveries and currently conducts research at four facilities, which include laboratories and farms. CAES supports Connecticut’s agricultural producers through education and research on climate impacts.

In its early years, CAES conducted research into fertilizer, amino acids in the human diet, pest control, vitamin content in various foods, soil and water improvement, and developing strains of hybrid corn. In doing so, it became the model for all other agricultural experiment stations that followed.

Today, in addition to its research on new crop species, agricultural pests, and invasive species, CAES educates the public on best management practices, facilitates the registration of agricultural technicians, and offers free soil testing

to residents of the state. As climate change makes ticks and mosquito-borne disease more common, CAES’s research and public health education efforts have become increasingly important.

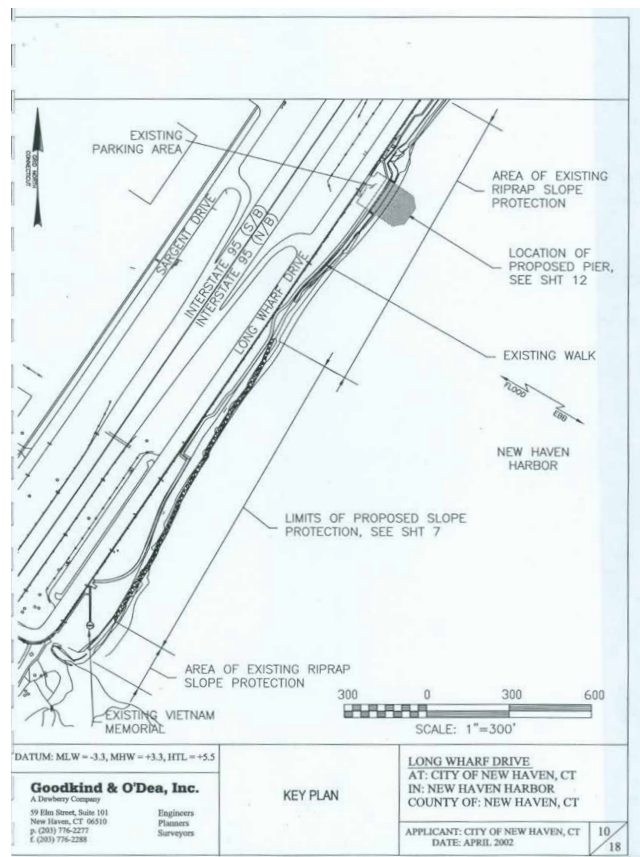
On CAES’s Huntington Street campus, the Donald F. Jones Auditorium, a 1930s Works Progress Administration project, is used for public lectures and speaker series. It has also served as the home meeting place for the Garden Club of New Haven.

Gretchen Merkt, a long-time teacher and club member, designed an outdoor education program for Long Wharf Nature Preserve [see p. 47]. She described the program in this way:

The Outdoor Education Program for New Haven Public School children at the Nature Preserve is learning firsthand about nature from nature itself. It is showing, touching, and feeling. It is wondering, discussing, asking, and, sometimes, figuring out the answer for yourself. For example, why aren’t squirrels here anymore? What does every living thing need to survive?

With their involvement, the children learn more respect for living things and a greater understanding of marine life. The class selects what they wish to study—the beach area, trees and insects, or pollution and conservation. Sometimes they choose all three programs. All aspects of the school curriculum are integrated into this outdoor program—language arts, math, art, and, of course, science. The overall emphasis is on problem-solving and logical thinking: the basis for a good education.





Gretchen Merkt working with a student

June 9, 1977

Dear Mrs. Merkt,

Thank you  
for letting us come  
I want to go back there.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Hardy *OK NE*

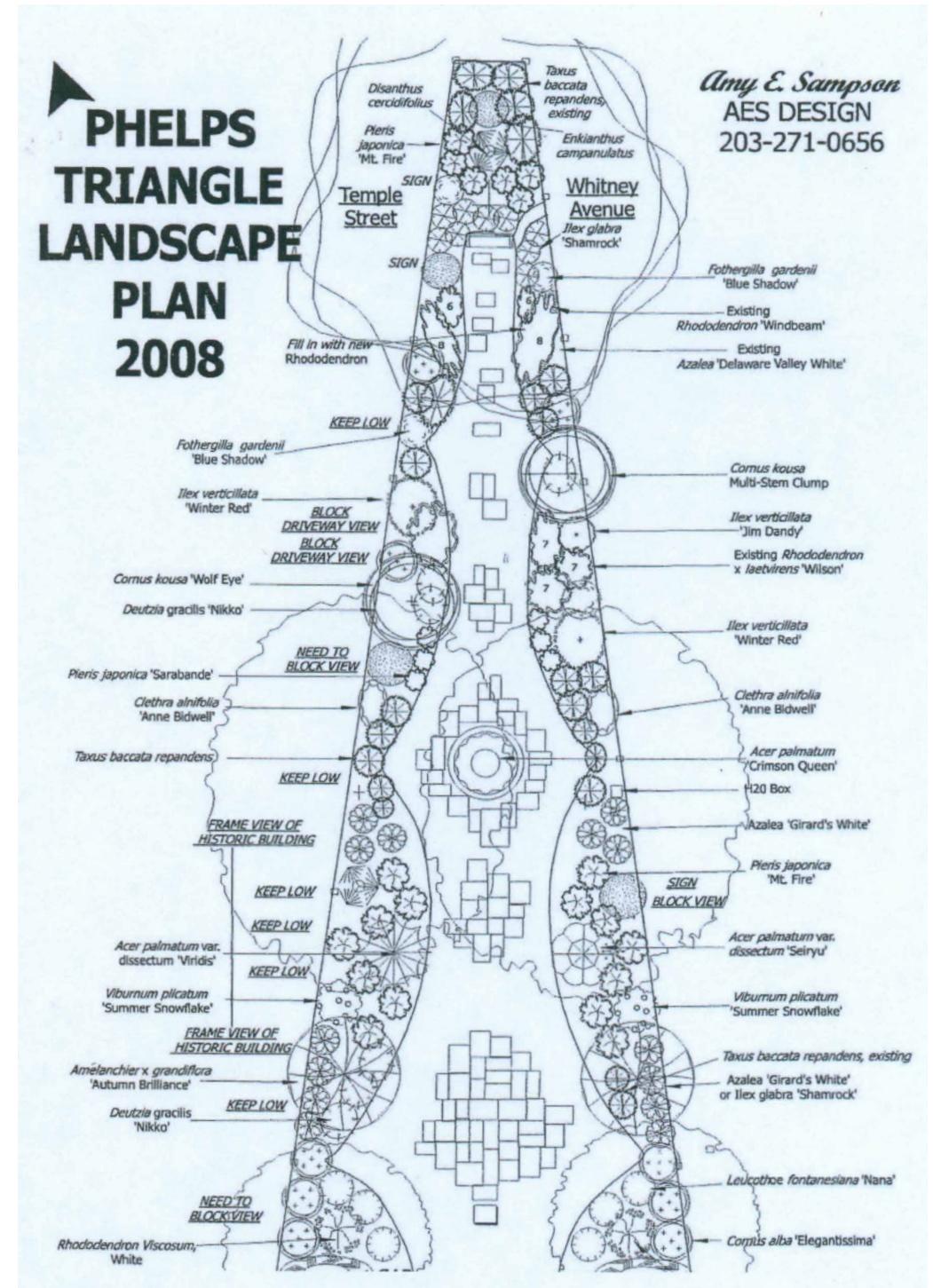
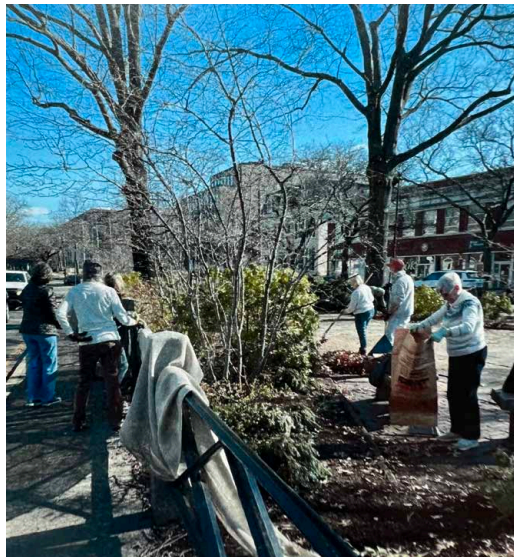
## 1994–2004

### Feeding Our Roots

At the turn of the new century, it was time to examine our structures once again to focus on membership, to support impactful civic projects to which the club is committed, and to continue to expand our knowledge. Longtime members and club presidents Louise Carter and Peg Campbell led the club in these efforts.

The Phelps Triangle mini-park remained a well-tended oasis in a busy city intersection, a quiet green haven in the summer, a protected burlapped corner in the winter [below and right; and p. 50]. Its plants, however, yearned for water. Therefore, the club upgraded and computerized the watering system in Phelps.

Membership was growing steadily, but increased membership presented problems. How do you keep members informed? What is the easiest way to stay connected? These questions were answered





by the creation of a monthly newsletter, *Over the Fence*, a welcome publication. It featured graphic designer John McCrillis's logo on the first page, committee reports, upcoming events, and the president's remarks. It became a much-anticipated piece of mail in 1995, enlivened by its vivid descriptions of the "On Our Laurels" flower show held at the New Haven Historical Society and punctuated by Ruth Martin's *New Yorker* gardening cartoon collection. Additionally, the directory noted a change. The membership voted to accept men!

Garden trips continued to be popular, but they now extended far beyond the boundaries of New Haven County, with members crossing

## ORIGINAL LOGO OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF NEW HAVEN

The introduction of a monthly newsletter provided the Garden Club of New Haven with a medium to more easily connect and communicate with its growing membership. The driving force behind this new effort was club member Ruth Martin, who undertook the challenge of creating a document that not only imparted essential information in a clear and concise fashion but was also distinctive and unique. Ruth herself could write and edit copy and share messages, but she also understood the importance of including graphics and creating a monthly mailing that was immediately recognizable—a visual representation of the Garden Club.

Ruth turned to John O.C. McCrillis to create a club logo. McCrillis was known widely as one of the country's leading calligraphers and book designers. He studied at the Rhode Island School of Design with master calligrapher John Howard Benson and majored in graphic design. After serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps during the war, McCrillis earned an M.F.A. at the Yale School of Art, where he studied with Bauhaus color theorist Josef Albers. He went on to have a fulfilling career as head of the design department at Yale University Press for



nearly thirty years. He also taught calligraphy at the Yale School of Art and at the Creative Arts Workshop. Over his long career, he took on hundreds of freelance projects in publication design, calligraphy, and painting. Several of those projects were designs for the Garden Club of New Haven.

The logo that McCrillis created was simple, relevant, memorable, and timeless. It instantly connected the club with its mission and projects, and it placed the club in the very heart of the city, on the New Haven Green. The image was produced in a strong green color, evocative of the environment, nature, sustainability, growth, and harmony.



waters to explore new destinations and discover new plants. The year 1996 found the club on trips to Fishers Island and to England to attend the Chelsea Flower Show...yes, *that* flower show.

After returning to New Haven, perhaps inspired by European designs and displays, members planted a Roman garden at the Yale University Art Gallery to complement the exhibition *I, Claudia: Women of Ancient Rome* [above]. This garden featured a remarkable collection of heirloom roses.

There remained a focus on education, “promoting knowledge of gardening, preservation of natural resources, and civic horticultural work in the Greater New Haven area.” Ever-mindful of its mission, the club acknowledged its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1999 by distributing 300 books on biodiversity to schools, libraries, and museums.

Collaboration with civic partners was at the forefront of the club’s planning. Between 2001 and 2003, members established gardens at several Habitat for Humanity sites, often bringing plants that they had divided from their own gardens and relocating them along the sidewalk strips, under shady trees, or in window boxes. The club also planted dogwoods and a white oak on the Upper Green [above left] and a magnolia tree at Edgerton Park in memory of Susan Crosby, a beloved former president [above right].

## 2004–14

### *Sitting Under the Elms*

Planting was the theme that wove its way through many of the years of this new decade. In 2005 an elm tree was planted on the New Haven Green and dedicated to Anna Glen Vietor, a former president of the club and a philanthropist both in New Haven and New York City. In 2009 a group of members undertook a new project, designing and installing a Shakespeare Garden at Common Ground Magnet School [below]. This project was showcased when the students performed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* surrounded by the exact plants and bushes mentioned in the plays and poetry of Shakespeare. In recognition of this service, the school presented the club with its Local Environmental Hero award at the school's annual gala, Feast from the Fields.



In 2010 the club assisted the Urban Resources Initiative (URI) [below] in the mapping of New Haven's urban canopy. Members encouraged the leadership to channel this interest and enthusiasm into the recognition of URI's work by submitting a proposal to the GCA for a Founders Fund Award. The proposal, called Training + Trees: Restoring New Haven's Urban Canopy, included extensive documentation. It was selected as one of three national finalists that year, and the club was pleased to receive an award check, which it passed on to the URI.

A tulip tree and a scarlet oak were planted on the New Haven Green. The Wagner Garden, in memory of club member Barbara Wagner, was planted in the Park of the Arts behind the Neighborhood Music School, and significant renovations took place at Phelps Triangle Park thanks to generous gifts from past presidents Horty Wilson and Anna Glen Vietor. In addition, two Chinese elm trees were planted in front of the Historical Society. The club shoveled a lot of dirt!



In 2011 the GCA's Zone II meeting, held in New Haven and chaired by Carol F. Ross, a past president of the New Haven club, sponsored an event that harkened back to the club's celebration of New Haven's cultural heritage in 1965. More than 200 guests were invited to tour the buildings and parks of New Haven and Yale University and to attend dinners in club members' homes. After dinner, they were educated, inspired, and entertained by noted local speakers—gardeners, designers, writers, environmental lawyers, doctors, architects, and musicians.

Also in 2011, the Garden History and Design Committee formally documented the Phelps Triangle Park and submitted photos and historical information to the Smithsonian's Archives of American Gardens. It is rewarding to know that the work of ninety years will be preserved for posterity.

In 2013 the Civic Committee, building on the wave of elm tree planting on the New Haven Green in the 1980s and also on the thread of therapeutic and educational work with children during the war years, suggested involving the children of New Haven in the growing and replanting of elm trees, especially in areas where an increase of the tree canopy would be beneficial to them. For young and old alike, the 2013 Tree Project stimulated a renewed sense of stewardship and history among New Haven residents and visitors, elevated the historical importance of the American elm, restored and increased New Haven's elm canopy, and educated and reconnected the community with its identity as the Elm City.

Looking toward the future, the club continued to innovate and to build upon its past. At the first meeting of the new season in October 2012, four long-time members participated in a panel conversation about the club. Their experiences epitomized the life of the club and the ways in which it had changed and responded to the times, whether in war or peace, social turmoil or prosperity. Some of their fondest memories were of the holiday arrangements, handmade and delivered by members to hospitals and nursing homes in New Haven, a practice that has become a Garden Club tradition. Others

recalled the Kitchen Workshop floral arranging classes taught by the talented Betsy Nininger, a former president of the club; the stimulating speakers at meetings; and the trip to the Chelsea Flower Show (of course). To a woman, each remembered activities involving beautifying the city, whether at Phelps Triangle, at Long Wharf Nature Preserve, on the Green, or at parks within the city. And several spoke of the reinvigoration of the club since the turn of the century and of ways in which the club had developed, dramatically, in floral arranging, flower show participation, natural resource preservation, and civic involvement.

Civic, Horticulture, and Conservation are the three touchstones of our mission, and these memories of our long-time members can serve as guideposts in the twenty-first century. From those early years, when our first president, Florence Bradley, encouraged her friends to join



Holiday arrangements [left];  
flower arranging workshop with  
area schoolchildren [above]

THE 2013 TREE PROJECT:  
American Elms in New Haven, on  
Its Green, and in Its Neighborhoods

In 2013 the Garden Club of New Haven began a multifaceted project that involved many civic partners (the Proprietors of the Green, the Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven Schools—both public and private—, and city government leaders). A horticultural component involved propagating, planting, growing, and documenting disease-resistant American elms. A self-guided walking tour, available as a paper brochure and via cell phone, highlighted existing historical structures on the Green and identified previous buildings and events of historical note. A video, produced and available on DVD, chronicled the history of the Green for current and future generations of Elm City residents and visitors. The video narration clearly set the scene from the outset:

*New Haven is one of America's oldest cities and to this day, the New Haven Green is the center of civic, religious, educational, and commercial life in the city. There is a shared affection for the central square that simultaneously brings people together in a grand public state while graciously reflecting the remarkable history of New Haven.*



Karyl Evans, a member of the Garden Club and an Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker, produced and directed this video project, titled *The New Haven Green: Heart of a City*. Evans has been producing and directing for more than thirty years on both the East and West Coasts. Her talents are legendary, and her awards are many.

In addition to securing the services of Karyl Evans, the club was able to engage Paul Giamatti as the narrator of the film [above]. A former New Haven resident and an American character actor and producer, Giamatti is best known for his roles in such films as *Private Parts*, *Sideways*, *Rock of Ages*, *Cinderella Man*, and, most recently, *The Holdovers*.



The Huneebee Project,  
winner of the Florence  
Bradley Award in 2021

her for a drive “out of the city to see country gardens”—all the way to Woodbridge—our members had embraced these themes and found that they could, indeed, enjoy gardening and much else in the city.

The board of 2012 looked back to those years, and in its wish to recognize and honor the early days and the intrepid first president, created the Florence Bradley Award to be given annually to community organizations or individuals whose work aligns with the Garden Club’s values, themes, and focus [above]. From those early days, the club had worked to establish itself as an important player in the city of New Haven. It formalized its organizational structure, cared for horticulture, advocated for civic improvements, allied itself with like-minded organizations, and preserved New Haven’s roots. The Florence Bradley Award reflected all these themes.

Concurrently with the work undertaken for the 2013 Elm Tree Project (propagating, nurturing, and planting elm trees; preparing a school curriculum on the importance of trees; developing a walking tour on the trees of the New Haven Green; commissioning a film created by Karyl Evans, an Emmy-winning documentary filmmaker and club member, and narrated by Paul Giamatti), members also became more heavily involved in the politics of Connecticut tree care,



especially following the damage Hurricane Irene left in her wake, as well as the damage caused by an early October snowstorm.

Mikey Hirschhoff, with her extraordinary legal skills, directed our efforts to cope with the electric companies and their aggressive attacks on street trees. She educated us, encouraged our advocacy, held workshops, and shared her knowledge with garden clubs throughout the state in an attempt to curb the battle of trees and power lines [above].

In the spring, just for fun, a sixth Tulip Show was held, the first since 1930!

Meanwhile, a wide range of organizations were recognizing the work of the Garden Club, acknowledging its focus not only on the environment but also on the beautification of New Haven. The community applauded the club's efforts to garden organically; to add plants, flowers, fruits, and vegetables to urban landscapes; and to increase the tree canopy. These projects were now recognized as helping to improve soil quality, mitigate global warming, reduce the size of landfills, and protect local wildlife and pollinators.

## TREES AND POWER

Following the 2011 and 2012 storms that resulted in extensive long-term power outages in Connecticut, the Garden Club of New Haven became concerned that the electric distribution companies would seek authority for both removal of healthy, structurally sound street/roadside trees and for overly aggressive pruning that would damage such trees. Under the leadership of member Mary-Michelle (Mikey) Hirschhoff, as spokesperson on trees and power, the club has been actively involved at state and local levels in helping to achieve an appropriate balance between the need for reliable power and the benefits of street and roadside trees.

Given the economic, environmental, societal, health, and aesthetic advantages that trees confer, the club opposes the removal of healthy, nonhazardous trees. The club also recognizes that climate change makes a robust tree canopy even more essential to public health and safety, and power outages more frequent and severe. It thus supports undergrounding of distribution wires.



## Embracing New Tools

Between 2014 and 2016, heavy Connecticut snowstorms impacted winter meetings more frequently than in years past, and in the winter of 2015, meetings were repeatedly cancelled due to snow. Committees remained active and vibrant, however, with the use of email. The paper newsletter had been replaced. The club was now in the twenty-first century, and most members made good use of technology. A new website was built, Constant Contact was used for mailings and communication, and members were encouraged to “just Google it” for information.

Through these digital communications, the club committees continued to take the lead in educating members and, as importantly, the public, on issues such as trees and power lines. The Conservation Committee, for example, found through its research during those winter months how relevant homeowner water run-off issues had become. When in-person meetings resumed, the committee began to provide short informational tips to educate and inform the general membership. These “Green Minutes” grew from an initial focus on run-off water issues to broader conservation information on many aspects of gardening and plant life. Through the work of “Green Minutes” research, the club was moving well into the current environmental movements. As the club had shifted emphasis during other periods of its history in order to address present needs, so now members moved toward caring for the environment in new and different ways.

The club also became interested in protecting its archival history. Its centennial anniversary was approaching, and members began to think more carefully about the care of their historical documents. A committee met, sifted through years of historical papers, organized them, and moved them to a storage unit in a new climate-controlled facility. With the benefit of technology, much useful information was added to the club website.


**Install Porous Paving**  
If gravel is impractical, porous or permeable paving is an excellent alternative to using non-porous surfaces like asphalt or poured concrete for your driveway or other hardscaping. Permeable pavement has a number of benefits over non-permeable:

- The ground captures, absorbs, and cleans stormwater
- Overall better appearance
- Less ice and snow build-up
- Area remains cooler helping air quality and local vegetation.
- Reduces need for automated irrigation saving money and reducing water demand.

There are three types of construction:

1. Poured porous concrete mix
2. Permeable pavers, stone or concrete
3. Paving grid of plastic, concrete or brick

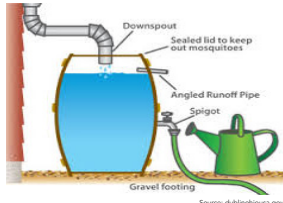
Conditions vary, but New Haven area has good permeable soils on which to install one of these solutions.  
[clear.uconn.edu/webinars/permeable\\_pavement\\_webinar.pdf](http://clear.uconn.edu/webinars/permeable_pavement_webinar.pdf)



PERMEABLE PAVING  
Source: city farmer's waterwise garden

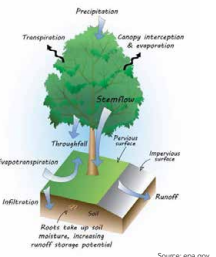
**Install A Rain Barrel**  
Collect rainwater and store it for future usage. By diverting water out of your gutters and into a rain barrel you'll have free water to use for watering your garden, filling a watering can, or even washing your windows. Plants prefer non-chlorinated organic rainwater to city water that comes out of the tap. Be certain to cover them for safety purposes and to add mosquito dunks if you do not drain them in a week. Barrels should be opaque to eliminate the possibility of algae growth within. Using a rainbarrel saves money, reduces stormwater run-off and helps your plants to thrive.  
[ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/watershed\\_management/wm\\_plans/lid/what\\_is\\_a\\_rain\\_barrel.pdf](http://ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/watershed_management/wm_plans/lid/what_is_a_rain_barrel.pdf)

rainbarrelguide.com



Source: dublinhouse.gov

**Plant Trees**  
Trees capture rainwater and reduce water pollution; plant some in your yard! Call before you dig 800-922-4455. Visit these websites for planting right sized and species of trees.  
[arborday.org/trees/righttreesandplace](http://arborday.org/trees/righttreesandplace)  
In New Haven, the Urban Resources Initiative (URI) will plant free street trees. To request a tree or for directions on planting visit:  
[environment.yale.edu/uri/get-involved/plant-your-own-tree/](http://environment.yale.edu/uri/get-involved/plant-your-own-tree/)  
To protect your trees from improper utility company pruning or removal of healthy trees visit:  
[gardenclubofnewhaven.org/utility-tree-pruning-and-removal.html](http://gardenclubofnewhaven.org/utility-tree-pruning-and-removal.html)

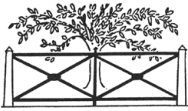


Source: apa.gov

Homeowner's  
Help  
for  
Managing  
Rain  
Water

A publication by  
The Conservation Committee of  
The Garden Club of New Haven

for further information visit  
[gardenclubofnewhaven.org](http://gardenclubofnewhaven.org)



In 2018 and 2019, speakers presented programs on such diverse topics as the Smithsonian Archives, managing rainwater [above], conserving trees, flower design, and gardening photography. These programs consistently drew a full house during monthly meetings. Environmental impact and the use of native plants were at the forefront of the club’s interests as well. The focus of activities now solidly included addressing environmental concerns and issues from the individual garden level to the community political front.

And yet the small joys of life were attended to as well. During the holiday workshop, members created 158 arrangements and not only carried out the tradition of delivering them to retirement homes and soup kitchens, but also began the practice of delivering them to members who were no longer able to attend meetings.

With all of this good work by committees and participation by members, the board decided to develop a strategic plan that would support the continuing increase in membership, the important focus

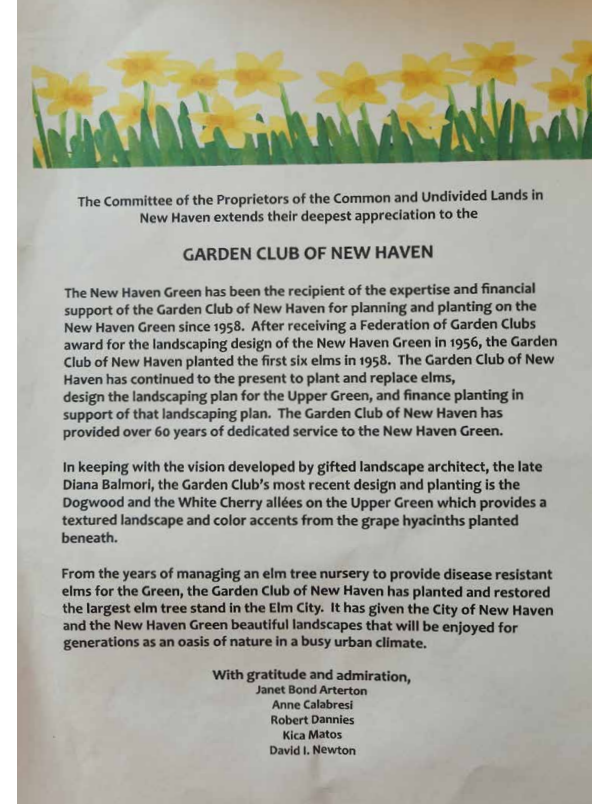
on the environment, and the joy and beauty of florals, gardening, and photography. The budget was in relatively good shape thanks to decades of stewardship, and the urban landscapes and gardens for which the Garden Club had assumed responsibility were in excellent shape as well.

These years reflected a growth and enthusiasm among members, with interest increased and knowledge gained from a strong and vibrant series of programs. Several long-time members were eager to sustain the club's good work by making legacy gifts. Recognizing the importance of budgetary stability, they established endowments to assure the continuance of the Garden Club of New Haven. In 2013 member Nancy Bartels and her husband, Henry, well-known philanthropists, established an endowment fund, which is managed by the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and is intended to help strengthen ties between the Garden Club of New Haven and the community, particularly in the area of community gardens. This monetary award allows the club to provide grants to organizations in the Greater New Haven area, or it may be used to support activities within the club that focus on education and civic engagement. The purpose and flexibility of this fund generously allow the club to further its mission.

Two years later another endowment fund was established by Susan Swords Stevens, a close friend of the club, to honor her mother, Cherry Shaw Swords, a longtime member of the club, and her grandmother Virginia Thorne Shaw, a past president and longtime member of the Rye Garden Club. The purpose of this fund is to support the club's educational programs. In recognition of this gift, the Garden Club includes in its programs an annual lecture, named for the fund, which is open to the public as conditions permit.

These substantial gifts support the continuing work of the Garden Club of New Haven. We are very grateful for them.

In addition to recognizing members through endowments, commemorative trees have been planted in honor and in memory of beloved members. In 2017, among trees planted on the Green and in



Edgerton Park, was a tree commemorating Lucy Elliot, a special and very longtime member of the club and the driving force behind its much-loved annual holiday workshop. The club had truly become the epitome of the Greek proverb “A society grows great when old men plant trees under whose shade they will never sit.” The Garden Club of New Haven had truly grown great as members now planted trees under whose shade many could sit.

While the serious work of financial planning was being undertaken by the board, members were enjoying other pursuits. Lectures and small tours to gardens, both local and distant, private and public, were plentiful and enthusiastically attended. Maintenance of commitments to landscapes such as Phelps Triangle and the Green was diligently undertaken. And the Proprietors of the New Haven Green continued to acknowledge their appreciation of the club's dedication to the Green and to greater New Haven with an award presented to the club on Powder House Day at the “Wake up the Green” celebration [above].

## HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS

Lucy Elliot joined the Garden Club of New Haven in 1989 and for more than twenty-eight years was an active member, leader, mentor, teacher, and dear friend to all of us. Club archives reflect that she served busily, productively, and effectively as chair of numerous committees—Horticulture, Visiting Gardens, Hospitality, Nominating, Flower Show, Holiday Workshop, and Civic, and sometimes she chaired these committees more than once! Additionally, she was a club president from 1995 to 1997. Her guidance, inspiration, follow-through, advice, and passion were so important to setting our vision and our mission.

Lucy was a consummate gardener and an amazing exemplar. We remember her for many things but thank her, in particular, for starting us on the annual tradition of creating festive arrangements for area nursing homes during our annual Holiday Workshop. Lucy prepared for this activity all year long. She saved cat food tins, which she painstakingly painted. On walks through her meadow, along the path down to Long Island Sound, in addition to thinking about the conservation of our natural resources, the creation of land trusts, and the preservation of wildlife habitats, she would gather



Queen Anne's lace, rose hips, teasel, thistles, grasses, and various seedpods, all of which she brought back to the house to dry, to spray paint silver and gold, and to store away carefully until December.

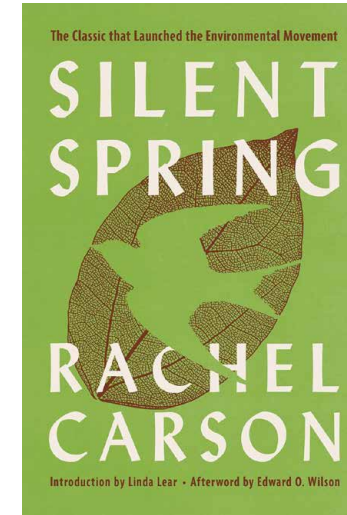
Then, Lucy encouraged all club members to join her at the carriage house in Edgerton Park, armed with clippers and greenery—boxwood, holly, and pine branches, whatever could be foraged from your backyard. She provided the containers, the labels, the sparkling decorations, and her boundless enthusiasm and encouragement. At the end of the morning almost 200 arrangements, large and small, had been designed for distribution throughout the city. What a time of fellowship! What a season of joy!



The club continued its commitment to care; committees maintained their focus; and the club was active locally and within the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut and the GCA. How excited and proud we were in 2019 to learn that one of our own, Deborah Edwards [above], had been named president of the GCA!

The focus and extent of the club also now included work along the Quinnipiac River, where members sought to address the issue of invasive plants. A small but enthusiastic group forcefully removed the invasives, eradicating them all, and replanted the area with native plants, creating a “pollinator meadow” along the river.

Members also created a garden for LEAP (Leadership, Education and Athletics in Partnership, Inc.), which had been cofounded in 1992 by longtime club member Anne Tyler Calabresi. The LEAP garden became a Bartels Award recipient and was managed by Susan Anton, a president of the Garden Club. This project transformed a back lot in New Haven into a “welcoming, beautiful space for children to learn to love nature and gardening” [see p. 68]. Once again, the club was supporting and promoting education.



tatiana  
schlossberg  
inconspicuous  
consumption  
the environmental  
impact you  
don't know  
you have

Socially, members began meeting for “book” dinners at various homes and focusing their discussions on conservation issues such as the Ripple Effect [above]. They went home with a renewed belief in our responsibility to act as stewards of the land. When members gathered for the holiday workshop during the winter of 2019, they did what they had done for decades, creating festive arrangements to give to nursing homes and to soup kitchens and to their homebound members.

The following year, the new president, Lisa Lovejoy, began her term by describing her focus to be “strengthening our Club’s mission to ‘create interest in the preservation of natural resources.’” The activities she promoted supported many of the current committee goals but expanded the club’s work on native plants, bees, and pollination. One of her first projects was to invite members and guests to a viewing of the film “The Pollinators” at a local theater. Not only was this event well attended but it also furthered the club’s environmental research.

As the calendar turned to another year, and in recognition that the club’s centennial was on the horizon, Susan Ehrenkranz and Carol F. Ross were asked to chair the Centennial Committee. Thankfully, they agreed, and the planning and organizing for this event began.

## POLLINATOR GARDENS

Quinnipiac Meadows Eugene B. Fargeorge Nature Preserve, located on the Quinnipiac River, is adjacent to a highly populated community, where neighbors enjoy walking, exercising, and birdwatching along the paths on the meadows and marshes.

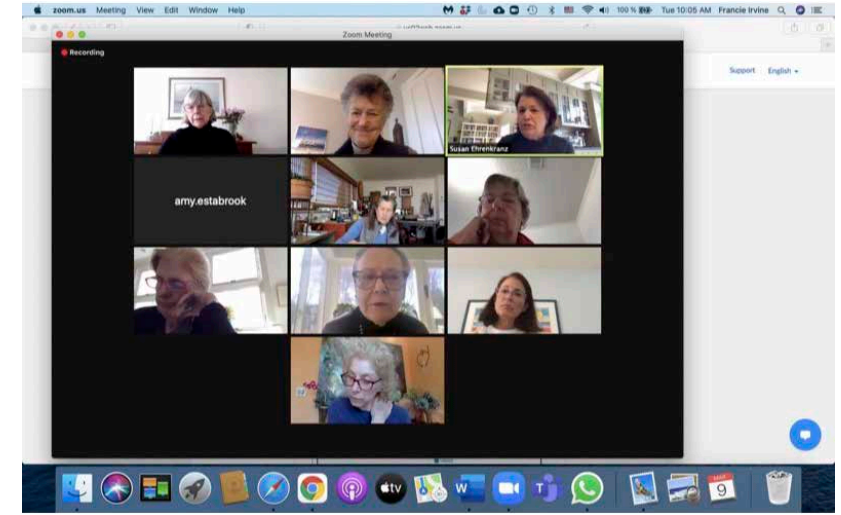
Starting in March 2019, the Garden Club, along with our civic partner Gather New Haven, has worked to eradicate specific invasive plant species and install two pollinator areas: one at the entrance to the preserve and one along the meadow trail. Planting native shrubs and perennials in their stead not only attracts pollinators, but also serves as a food source for fauna and birds.

Are you interested in planting a pollinator garden? You can help pollinators significantly by growing a diversity of native plants in your own space. The following regional native plant list, though not exhaustive, highlights species that have been shown to provide a number of benefits to a variety of pollinators. These native plants can be grown across rural and urban landscapes to create a new pollinator habitat or to enhance an existing habitat. They include key flowering plants that provide pollinators with nectar and pollen, host plants for caterpillars of butterflies and moths, plants that provide nest sites or nesting



materials for above-ground nesting birds, and plants that support specialist bees that require pollen from certain plants.

- Stonecrop (*Sedum*)
- Milkweed (*Asclepias*)
- Coneflower (*Echinacea*)
- Goldenrod (*Solidago*)
- Cape fuchsia (*Phygellius*)
- Yarrow (*Achillea*)
- Blazing star (*Liatris*)
- Wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)
- Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)
- Sunflower (*Helianthus*)
- Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum*)
- Cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*)



Suddenly, however, during the winter of 2020, life stopped and was to change completely. The world was faced with the catastrophic global pandemic of the COVID-19 virus. As the country was forced into quarantine, Garden Club activities were curtailed, and Lisa would have the difficult and monumental job of leading a club at a time when all in-person meetings and events were cancelled and membership recruitment had to be suspended.

The pandemic was to last for several years. While health and safety were paramount concerns, people all over the world strove to maintain some semblance of social organization and connection. The Garden Club was no exception. The board immediately created a phone chain, delivered masks marked with the Garden Club logo to all members, and hosted the first of many Zoom meetings [above]. Deborah Edwards, a past president of the club, was president of the GCA during this turbulent time. We were fortunate to have two strong leaders, Lisa and Debbie, to capably guide garden clubs, both locally and nationally, through the pandemic.

Confident in members' technological willingness and ability, the club was encouraged to gather for meetings virtually. They did this every month for more than a year. Members rallied to create programs

that could be enjoyed via video, and the club found, as did many other organizations that year, that participation increased with the ease of simply logging into a computerized meeting. Field trips that had been harder for some to attend before the pandemic became accessible as virtual events. Slide shows were crisp and clear on a personal screen. The volume could be easily adjusted. One could even attend meetings in sweatpants.

Affiliations with state and national organizations also offered many unexpected silver linings. Conferences offered by GCA and Federated were now available to all members. Attendance required no travel time and no expenses. With tenacity, the club continued its focus on the environment, maintaining its hope that life would return to a new normal in which environmental issues could once again be addressed.

In the years of the pandemic, other issues arose. Achieving diversity and inclusion became important topics throughout the culture of the United States, and the Garden Club of New Haven did its part to create programs and educate members about the importance of striving to reach this goal. The club acknowledged that we can always



learn from each other, and that diversity and inclusion are two interconnected concepts.

One of our club members, Deborah Desir, became the GCA Zone II member of the newly formed GCA ad hoc Committee on Cultivating Common Ground and Building Diversity, which addressed these issues despite the physical restrictions of the pandemic. As with numerous other clubs and organizations, the board also rewrote membership guidelines and by-laws to address this new focus.

The extreme Connecticut weather during the pandemic led to downed trees and loss of power for residents. Once again we were dealing with utility companies. To address the future risk of power loss and the management of that risk, the club mobilized its membership and social media contacts, contacted legislators, wrote letters, and won support for a Senate bill that would ensure the careful placement, trimming, and removal of trees vis-à-vis power lines.

In a careful, masked effort, the Civic Committee continued to support the removal of invasive plants at Edgerton Park as well as provide assistance to the Proprietors of the Green with the planting of four new elm trees. This committee had learned to work safely at a distance from one another while maintaining the public spaces for which the Garden Club was responsible.

Even as the Civic Committee was physically present in its work in various locations throughout the city, the Photography Committee held a virtual show [see pp. 72–73]. Despite the distance, many members competed in the teacup challenge, zooming in on petals, stems, leaves, and mechanics and benefiting from the judges' helpful comments. Learning continued.

Hospitality found a unique and touching way to further kindness and compassion during the pandemic years. From the holiday workshop, which was known for delivering arrangements to homebound members, the “Sunshine Committee,” as they now called themselves, served the club not by providing lunches during general meetings, but by delivering food and floral arrangements to “members who were ill or caring for a sick relative.”

As with all organizations throughout the world, many members looked to a future of some normalcy, but they wondered what that “new normal” might look like. As Lisa Lovejoy remarked in her final annual report, “the pandemic illuminated that we can change. We didn't just stand idly by. We stayed busy for ourselves, for the Club and for our community. We persevered!”

During the years 2021–22, the pandemic continued to demand quarantine and safety rules. By late spring of 2021, however, the club was beginning to hold celebrations outdoors, and by the fall, flexibility in meeting protocols would become key. Members experienced the negative effects of isolation and lobbied to hold in-person general meetings. During the spring of 2022, a drop in the prevalence of COVID permitted the club to hold the April 4 Shaw/Swords lecture in person at Jones Auditorium, and the celebratory annual meeting, with almost all members present, was held safely outdoors. In October of 2022, Emmy award-winning filmmaker Karyl Evans showed her film *Grove Street Cemetery: City of the Dead, City of the Living* to members at the Agriculture Station. It was a thrill to be together again, and a lively discussion followed her presentation. Now members looked forward to an actual guided tour of the cemetery.



Meetings were hybrid for the first few months of 2023. Committee chairs worked hard to “keep members informed and engaged with programs designed with captivating titles such as: ‘What’s Happening in Your Garden,’ ‘Show What You Grow,’ ‘Let’s Talk Houseplants,’ ‘Forced Branches,’ and ‘A Seed Exchange and Seed Bomb Workshop.’” And the Garden Club of America adapted to the pandemic by offering even more of its conferences and workshops virtually so that all members could participate. As in previous generations, club members had adapted and altered practices to provide education, fellowship, and strength to the club, its members, and the city as a whole.

Just as in the years following the Second World War, as the pandemic began to diminish, members slowly and carefully began to participate more fully in life [above]. To be together, learning, chatting about the details of inconsequential daily events, making connections again was invigorating and meaningful. The exchange of seeds of ideas and the camaraderie of meetings and lectures were finally realized.

The world opened up in 2023, but slowly. Many masks were thrown away and people all over the country began to gather. The

Garden Club met in person. For May Day of 2023, members gathered to create floral bouquets to be delivered to assisted living units, soup kitchens, and homebound members. Phelps Triangle began to look as beautiful and cared for as it had prior to 2020 as members, without masks, turned out to rake, prune, and remove the burlap. Membership continued to increase as it had after the war, and the resilience of the club was once again affirmed. Members had, as earlier in their history, shown themselves to be resourceful and generous. The focus was now on the future.

The Garden Club's centennial anniversary in 2024 provided the perfect opportunity to celebrate this strength, integrity, and resilience over one hundred years and to recognize the city that had nurtured this club. With foresight, the club voted to celebrate its centennial with an initiative, led by former president Susan Wildridge, to raise endowment funds to support the horticultural research of the future. This fund will award grants for projects throughout Connecticut that are specifically aligned with the mission of the Garden Club—to “create interest in and promote knowledge of gardening, preservation of natural resources and civic horticultural work.” As the club continues its long work of civic engagement with and commitment to New Haven's green spaces and its relationship with the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and more than forty other civic partners, its legacy will last in perpetuity.

The Centennial Committee co-chair, Susan Ehrenkranz, wrote a summary of goals and plans as the club was coming out of this “long pandemic siege” and into the joyful period of hope for the future. She focused the upcoming centennial on three concepts: Rooted in History, Planted in the Present, Branching into the Future. These are touchstones not only for the celebration itself but also for the century ahead.

And to commemorate the centennial, club member and graphic designer Amy Estabrook created a new logo [see p. 82] that will propel us into the future.

For one hundred years the club has changed and grown, finding and developing new ways to cope with life's exigencies and joys. It has maintained its commitment to its members, to green spaces, and to the city of New Haven. Our history revealed that we can change. The Garden Club of New Haven now has a long tradition of growing, developing, and protecting the values of gardening through our civic, horticultural, and conservation efforts. We have thrived, however, because of our members—past, present, and future.



## Acknowledgments

A book that encompasses the activities of 100 years owes thanks to many people. First and foremost, we are eternally grateful to Kathleen S. Lundgren. She carefully examined records, interviewed members, collected data, and updated and expanded her pamphlet, *An Inside Look at the Garden Club of New Haven: A Short History* (2012), to create the narrative text for this centennial publication. Her graceful and fluid prose provided the perfect background for our archival pictures and historical articles.

We thank our members who, over the century, took photographs, filled scrapbooks, wrote press releases, and compiled journals. These materials rested in many cardboard boxes in basements and attics throughout the city of New Haven until they were finally brought

together in a climate-controlled storage facility on Putnam Avenue, where they became more accessible and were designated as “archives.”

We thank the Centennial Committee members who culled through these archives, creating order and clarity as they searched for elusive flower show pictures and newspaper articles. In particular, we are grateful to Dee Lundberg, who proofread the first text and taught us the rule of commas; to Betsy Weber, who spent hours at the New Haven Museum, tracking down the original Federated Garden Club seal and the fundraising color charts; and to Lisa Totman, who poured over early city directories at the the Institute Library in an attempt to discover the given names of our members. Mrs. Frederick Waterman can now be identified as Elizabeth!

We offer heartfelt thanks to Emma Q. Norden, research librarian at the Whitney Library at the New Haven Museum, for her always cheerful assistance in hunting down elements of our history.

Many thanks go to Lesley Baier for her masterful editing, her careful eye, her patience, and her enthusiasm. She was able to piece together the various drafts and solve some of the puzzles. For example, she alerted us to the fact that one of our founding members, listed as Miss Van Name, was the daughter of Addison Van Name, the Yale librarian in the early twentieth century. He and his wife had only one daughter, Theodora, who is buried in Grove Street Cemetery.

We thank Judy Zimmer, Donia Jennings, and all of the staff at GHP Media. They kept us on schedule; coped with our text, font, and page-count changes; and published a book of great quality.

Finally, this book would not exist were it not for Rebecca Martz! A talented, experienced graphic designer and the Yale University Printer, she pieced together the fragments of 100 years and presented them with sensitivity to color, typography, and balance. *The Garden Club of New Haven: Celebrating One Hundred Years* is a book that is clear, visually pleasing, and elegant. We are so grateful to Rebecca.

*Susan Ehrenkranz and Carol F. Ross*



Appendices

## Garden Club of New Haven Centennial

June 2024–June 2025

Rooted in History  
Planted in the Present  
Branching into the Future

### CO-CHAIRS

Susan Ehrenkranz and Carol F. Ross

### CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Elaine Anderson, Vicki Arkins, Joanne Bailey, Hart Caparulo, Caren Carpenter, Amy Estabrook, Karyl Evans, Maggie Gottschalk, Betsy Hartmayer, Robin Hochstrasser, Francie Irvine, Billie Ladd, Molly LeVan, Dee Lundberg, Debby Moore, Lupi Robinson, Robin Sauerteig, Jane Snaider, Lisa Totman, Sally Tyler, Betsy Weber, Samantha Whitney, Susan Wildridge

### THE COMMITTEE EXTENDS THANKS TO

The past presidents who have given advice and wise counsel, serving as ad hoc members of the committee.

The many Garden Club members who spearheaded, led, and supported special centennial initiatives.



## Centennial Planting Project

The purpose of this extensive planting project is to reinvigorate and strengthen the club's involvement with more than forty nonprofit community groups.

In collaboration with Richard Jaynes—an honorary member of the club, recent Garden Club of America national award winner, and owner of Broken Arrow Nurseries in Hamden, Connecticut—three different shrubs introduced by Dr. Jaynes will be presented to each organization as a thank-you for their many years of collaboration with and support for the Garden Club of New Haven.

### THE SHRUBS ARE

For sun: *Ilex verticillata* 'Sunsplash'—Winterberry holly

For shade: *Kalmia latifolia* 'Sarah'—Mountain laurel

For the shore: *Clethra alnifolia* 'Ruby Spice'—Summersweet

This is an opportunity to recognize and salute our many civic partners in the New Haven community. A plan will be developed to track the shrubs after planting.

### PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Ashlar Village

Audubon Park of the Arts

Children's Center of Hamden

CitySeed

Common Ground School

The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

Connecticut Hospice

Creative Arts Workshop

Edgerton Park Conservancy

Edgewood Park

Eli Whitney Museum

Evergreen Woods

Fairhaven Community Health Center  
Fellowship Place  
Foote School  
Fort Nathan Hale  
Gather New Haven  
Grove Street Cemetery  
Habitat for Humanity  
Hamden Hall School  
Hopkins School  
LEAP  
Leeway New Haven  
Mary Wade Home  
The Memory Garden at Southern Connecticut University  
Mill River Watershed  
Neighborhood Music School  
New Haven Free Public Library  
New Haven Green  
New Haven Museum  
New Haven Public Schools  
Pardee Morris House  
Pardee Rose Garden  
Phelps Triangle  
Ronald McDonald House  
Saint Martin de Porres School  
Saint Thomas's Day School  
Urban Resources Initiative  
West Rock Nature Center  
Whitney Center

## *Fund for the Future*

This fund is established to honor the centennial of the Garden Club of New Haven, its past service to the Greater New Haven community, and the promise of its future civic stewardship. It is primarily envisioned as a scholarship for graduate and undergraduate students attending educational institutions in the state of Connecticut, but it may also be used to support special projects matching the fund's purpose and goals, which are to support student and community research, education, and service in the areas that match the club's purpose and goals.



## *Garden Club of New Haven Centennial Environmental Heroes*

The following individuals, often unsung, have made a powerful difference environmentally and horticulturally in the Greater New Haven community. We are honored to recognize them in our centennial year.

NANCY ALDERMAN, founder and president of Environment and Human Health, Inc. (EHHI), a nonprofit organization of physicians and public health professionals dedicated to protecting human health from environmental harm. Nancy was a president of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment; member of the National Board of the Environmental Defense Fund; member of the Governor's Pollution Prevention Task Force; recipient of the Clyde Fisher Award of the Environmental Law Section of the Connecticut bar; and recipient of the New England Public Health Association's Heustis/Mood Award, given to individuals for outstanding contributions in the area of environmental health.

VINCENT BRESLIN, cofounder of the Werth Center for Coastal and Marine Studies at Southern Connecticut State University. Vince and his students have done exceptional work in coastal and marine environmental research to clean up Long Island Sound.

COLLEEN MURPHY-DUNNING, director of the Hixon Center for Urban Sustainability and the Urban Resources Initiative. Colleen has also been instrumental in the establishment of and continuing work on the New Haven Botanical Garden of Healing.

CHARLES NEGARO and NANCY DENNETT. Founder of Atticus Bookstore and Café in 1980 and Chabaso Bakery in 1995, Charlie served on the board of Common Ground School/New Haven Ecology Project and was a founding member and former chair of the board of New Haven Farms, which merged with the New Haven

Land Trust to form Gather New Haven in January 2020. Nancy has worked hand-in-hand with Charlie to make New Haven a better place to live.

STACEY SPELL, president of the West River Neighborhood Services Corporation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a green, peaceful community through events and community engagement. A retired city homicide detective, Stacey sits on the boards of Elmseed and the Greater Dwight Development Corporation. He is an active tutor at New Haven Reads and chair of the Deaconard of Pitts Chapel U.F.W. Baptist Church.

## *Garden Club of New Haven Centennial Honorary Committee*

We are delighted that the following community leaders agreed to join us as honorary members of the Centennial Committee, serving as a resource for the committee and its programs.

ELSIE CHAPMAN, former president of the board of directors of the New Haven Free Public Library Foundation and former president of the Historic Wooster Square Association

HENRY FERNANDEZ, executive director of LEAP (Leadership, Education and Athletics in Partnership, Inc.)

WILLIAM GINSBERG, president and CEO of the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

RICHARD JAYNES, founder of Broken Arrow Nursery

MICHAEL MORAND, communications director of Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; member of the board of directors of the New Haven Free Public Library, the Friends of Grove Street Cemetery, and the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

MARGARET ANNE TOCKARSHEWSKY, executive director of the New Haven Museum

C. JASON WHITE, director of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

## *Ode to Past Presidents*

Here's to the Garden Club. Give three cheers  
All those ladies, all these years.

A sixtieth birthday, oh what a party!  
Let's celebrate, we're hale and hearty.

From early beginnings we've done our best  
To plant and pot with verve and zest.

Here's to the leaders who kept us going,  
Thirty-two presidents, wise and knowing.  
Edith Suttie, the daffodil pro,  
Margaret Cannon, "awfully good show,"  
Marge Hemingway and Betty Greene,  
More gracious ladies we've never seen.  
For horticulture we asked a pal  
Like Stancliff, Carol or Crosby, Sal.

Need an event? Don't say when  
Or what or where—call Anna Glen.  
And for flower arranging way above par  
There's Carol again and talented Mar  
Hosley then Hegel, Harris and Horty  
All kind and patient. Why—we've even been sporty!  
For—if you need rallying around a cause  
That's Jeanne Sleeper's racquet, she'll never pause.  
Such tireless leaders. The jobs get done  
Ask Linda, ask Joyce, ask Betty. It's fun.

We've drunk our sherry, sipped our tea  
But run boutiques and worked tirelessly  
From mini-parks to giant shows  
We've decked the halls, tied Christmas bows.

We've met in homes in public spaces  
We are members all—with many faces  
Caring for New Haven City  
We have given much to make it pretty:  
Phelps Triangle, close to Yale,  
The Flag Court at Fort Nathan Hale,  
Edgerton, we began that, too,  
And Pardee-Morris grows anew.  
We gave a hand to Schooner, Inc.  
Conservation makes us think.  
With civic concerns we deal with ease  
Our latest effort is “Project Trees.”

So onward and upward. We all do extol  
Presidents and winners of the Waterman Bowl.  
Bouquets to each lady, outstanding and clever,  
May the talents you've shown, make our Club bloom forever.

*Ruth W. Martin*  
*April 1984*

### *Ode to Past Presidents*—a continuation

Here we are again—at seventy-five  
Like the trees that we plant we continue to thrive.  
So many projects, so much to do,  
our Club has been led by a fearless few.  
Each with a cause and with help from us all  
The work has been done for events large and small.

Urged towards perfection with Jennifer Radford as guide  
Our civic achievements we've acknowledged with pride.  
The trees kept on growing when Barb rushed into the Brink  
While filling a term so our Club would not sink  
Which of course it would never, with leaders so clever

As Babbitt and Crosby, they showed what to do.  
Zone meeting with Betsy, restored greenhouses with Sue,  
We then continued on our winning way by rescuing “Parcel K”  
Which reemerged with dash and verve  
As the new and bigger Long Wharf Nature Preserve.

Louise Carter led as interest grew, in conservation  
And the environment, too.  
With Peg Campbell we gained a logo, a newsletter—and then—  
Our Garden Club voted, and we gained MEN!

We also have flower shows every two years.  
They are elegant, professional, and bring awards, honors, and cheers.

Yes, we are branching out, traveling here and there  
We teach, we judge, we really care.  
Lucy Elliot has helped us. She plants and she grows.  
Then lastly there's Sandy who wins all the shows.  
Taylor's talents are multi, she's crafted projects with zest  
And keeps us quite busy, no laurels for rest.

As Project 2000 is about to arrive,  
Jean Hoagland will lead us—onward we strive.

*Ruth W. Martin*  
*May 1999*

### *Ode to Past Presidents*—a continuation yet again

2000, a millennial milestone, a new president, too.  
But southern climes called her, what should we do?

We encouraged Louise to rise from the floor,  
to oversee business—our plantings, and more.  
She guided our Club with good cheer and ease,  
Even established a nursery in East Rock for trees.

With bylaws reviewed and committees engaged,  
Sally oversaw awards and flowers arrayed...  
At New Haven museums and habitat sites,  
“Inventing New Haven” was spelled out in lights.

With Letha and Betsy our direction was clear,  
Design classes, arranging, and planting all year.  
But, after the flurry of Kitchen One, Kitchen Two  
And the growth of the Club, would one president do?

A duo stepped in, Edwards and Ladd, by last name,  
Who divided the tasks but kept it one and the same.  
They focused on workshops, on botanical bugs,  
Planted at mini-parks, stuffed holiday trugs.

With Carol we celebrated civic connections,  
Renewing old ties, finding different directions—  
URI mapping, garden planting at schools,  
Teaching at Fellowship—design by the rules.

The momentum was building, and one thing was clearer.  
The GCA Zone meeting was nearer and nearer.  
Susan [E.] gathered a committee and took it in stride,  
Welcoming visitors with warmth, grace, and pride,  
But, before their arrival there was fundraising needed.  
“Buy our cookbook, visit flower shows, bid on items,” she pleaded.

After that busy weekend, our image was looming,  
Our presence was visible, our impact was zooming.  
But, not to relax, lest our face disappear,  
We followed it up with a movie premiere.  
And, to prevent our work from becoming a mystery,  
We described it on radio and through a Brief History.

Next, Billie returned for a term on her own,  
Gathered us at Whitney Center—a temporary home.

During those years our reputation did grow  
With the Founders Award, Bartel’s gift, sixth Tulip Show.

Bonnie’s committees promoted work in the state,  
On bioswale maintenance and a water run-off grate.  
They studied, they researched, they worked, and they wrote  
About Trees and Powerlines—we sent more than one note!

Susan [W.] stressed beautification, renovating the Green,  
Planting memorial trees and enhancing the scene.

Then, 2020 brought flu to the nation,  
Forcing activities to yield to forced isolation.

In true Garden Club fashion, we adapted and balanced,  
Encouraged by Lisa’s many skills and talents.  
She taught us to Zoom, to meet from afar,  
To attend virtual lectures from armchair or car.  
How fortunate we were to have her when we need her—  
A calming presence, a willing cheerleader!

The pandemic continued but vaccines were helps,  
So, Susan [A.] revised the website, and Phelps.

Cordalie reinforced traditions and meetings,  
Enlivened with boxwood and seasonal greetings.

As the calendar came closer to ’24-’25,  
The Club was a-buzz—a busy beehive.  
So many engaged in designing a year  
That celebrates open spaces and things we hold dear.

We recognized heroes, partners, and friends,  
Continued our flower shows, plantings, and trends.

Rooted in history, in the present we plant,  
And reach for the future with a scholarship grant.

One hundred years—a milestone, a groundbreaking mark—  
Our Club was created from one little spark.  
We continue to learn, to design, and to grow,  
To connect with our City, to weed, dig, and sow.

We share our Founders' vision with pride  
And marvel at the fruits of that simple car ride.

*Carol F. Ross*

2024

## *Garden Club of New Haven Members, 1924–2025*

This is a list of all members of the club from its inception through the end of the centennial, put together with much diligent and careful research. Due to gaps in club archives, some names may be missing; our apologies for any omissions or errors. Also, the challenges of finding the first names of members must be noted. Until 1975 members were only listed by their husbands' names (e.g., Mrs. Arthur Bradley, not Florence Bradley).

\* Club President

+ Founding Member

Deborah Abildsoe	Wendy Baurmeister	Ann Burrow	Margaret Clement	Dawn Davidson	Pixie Elsberry
Ruth Adt	Louise Beers	Harriet Burton	Penn Clement	Helen Davie	Marilyn Elsworth
Nancy Ahlstrom	Ruth Behre	Elizabeth Burwell	Vicki Clement	Bessie Davis* <sup>+</sup>	Anna P. Elwell
Martha Alexander	Anne Bell	Jody Bush	William Cobbett	George Davis	Mona Endicott
Sybil Alexandrov	Sharon Bender	Harriet Elizabeth Scofield	Evangeline Coburn	Cornelia Day	Amy English
Ann Alford	Cordalie Benoit*	Bushnell	Mrs. John Coburn	Gertrude Day <sup>+</sup>	Eloise English
Elizabeth Alford	Emma Berger	Libby Butterworth	Marion Coffin	Nancy de Noird	Henrietta English
Pody Alley	Ethel Berger	Anne Byers	Gwen Collins	Rebecca DeFelice	Katharine Dana English <sup>+</sup>
Edith Alling	Jane Berger	Bonnie Byers	Deborah Cook	Prudence Demarest* <sup>+</sup>	Leila English*
Frances Alling	Mildred Berger	Jane Byers	Edith Cook	Anna Deming	Rose English
Lucy Ambach	Lea Berliner	Jeannette (Jenny) Byers	Jean Cook	Evelyn Deming	Sheila English
Elaine Anderson	Adelle Billings <sup>+</sup>	Anne Tyler Calabresi	Mrs. Phillipe Corbett	Lola Derby	Amy Estabrook
Bodie Angelotti	Dickey Billings	Judith Calvert	Mrs. Harrison Corbin	Deborah Desir	Mary Bush Clement (Bushy)
Susan Anton*	Patty Billings	Margaret (Peg) Campbell*	Jane Corbin*	Dorothy DeVane	Estabrook
Vicki Arkins	Jeanne Bjorkman	Mary Campbell	Page Coulter	Margie Devane	Karyl Evans
Barbara Armstrong	Dorothy Blake	Jeanette Peabody Cannon	Paula Coyne	Dorothy L. Diefendorf	Kristin Fairey
Bob Arnstein	Ruth Blake	Margaret Cannon*	Selma Crane	Jeanette Diefendorf	Elizabeth Farnam*
Peggy Atherton	Sheila Blake	Penny Canny	Emma Creadick*	Rose Disesa	Sallie Farrel
Margaret Babb	Addie L. Church Bliss	Hart Caparulo	Carmel Cronin	Victoria Disesa	Elane Feldman
Betsy Babbitt*	Pam Blum	Mrs. F.C.H. Carder	Sally Crosby*	Allie Dodge	Frances Fenn
Eleanor (Nory) Babbitt	Margaret Bodell	Isabel Caride	Susan (Sue) Crosby*	Joan Dollard	Anna Festa
Linda Badgley	Louise Boorsch	Nyla Carleton	Alice Cross	Halppen Donoghoe	Mae Festa
Joanne Bailey	Corinne Borchard	Caren Carpenter	Roseline Crowley	Laura Doolittle	Pamela Field
Katharine Bailey	Betty Boulpaep	Esther Carroll	The Reverend Michael	Audrey Downey	Virginia Fisher*
Dorie Baker	Betsy? Sally? Bradley	Louise Carter*	Cunningham	Karen Downer Doyle	Marguerite Fitch
Anna? Baldwin	Florence Bradley* <sup>+</sup>	Melissa Castleman	Ann Curtis	Andrew Drabkin	Natalie Fitch
Pat Ballard	Mary Bradley	Pat Cavanagh	Lucy E. Curtiss	Janice Dreier	Peggy Flint
Ellie Barclay	Mary Elizabeth Mersick Bradley	Kitty Champlin	Judith Cushingham	Ellie Drury	Helen Forbes
Kitty Barclay	Mabel Brennand	Katarzyna Chawarska	Michelle Cuzzocreo	Nancy Duple	Joy Ford
Juliette Barker*	Hazel Georgine Brewer	Betsy Cheney	Dorothea Daggett	Robin DuBois	Alice Foster
Sela Barker	Janice Brightwell	Ann Childs	Frances Daggett	Angelica Dunham	Maria Freda
Beatrice Barnes <sup>+</sup>	Barbara Brink*	Dibbie Clark	Mrs. Stanley Daggett	Laura Dunning	Karen Freedman
Molly Barnes* <sup>+</sup>	Leila Bronson	Dorothy Clark	Anna Dana	Peggy Eatherton	Dorothy Freese*
Helen Barnet	Mrs. Nathan S. Bronson	Grace Clark	Maria T. Dana	Adele Edgerton	Judi Freudenburg
Marian Barnum	Rebecca Brown	Mrs. Henry Clark	Mary Dangremond	Deborah (Debbie) Edwards*	Petra Frisell
Nancy Bartels	Midge Bunney	Judith Clark	Marty Daniels-Cohen	Sarah Edwards	Lucia Fulton
Marion S. Bartlett	Ann Burdett	Mary Clark	Olive L. Dann	Susan Ehrenkranz*	Christine Gabriel
Grace Bateman	Martha Burdett	Mary Lee Clark	Mrs. Darby II	Doris Eilers	Maggie Gage
Bodie Baumer	Terri Burditt	Connie Clement	Marty Dauwalder	Lucy Elliot*	Virginia Gaillard

Clara L. Galpin <sup>+</sup>	Elizabeth (Betsy) Hartmayer	Mabel Hull	Deborah Lifton	Carol Meeks	Mary Outtrim
Melissa Gambaccini	Beth Hazard	Kathryn Hunter	Catherine Lincoln	Eileen Merchant	Apple Owen
Betsy Gentry	Helen Heard	Dorothy Hurt	Annah Linqvist	Gretchen Merkt	Mrs. John C. Parker
Anne Marie Gilbert	Linda Hegel*	Edith (Ede) Hooker Ilmanen	Peg Lippard	Marsha Merrell	Ruth Parker
Eliza Gilbert	Trish Helm	Francie Irvine	Helen Liveten	Sharon Milikowsky	Charlotte Parmelee
Beth Gilson	Ellie Hemingway	Helene Jackson	Marty Loeser	Katherine Miller	Sue Pearson *
Kel Ginsberg	Marjorie (Marge) Hemingway*	Patty Jackson	Lisa Lovejoy*	Maria Miller	Anne Peters
Melanie Ginter	Minerva Hemingway	Ina Jaffe	Pam Lovejoy	Peggy or Imogene Miller	Mrs. Clarence A. Pierce
Anne Godsey	Alison Henning	Christine Janis	Tommie Lozier	Carolyn Millman	Letitia Pierson*
Susan Godshall	Jerry Hesse	Delphine Jenkins	Clara Lull	Florence Mills	Ann Pingoud
Katharine Goodbody	Jean Heston	Elizabeth Jones	Delaney (Dee) Lundberg	Marjorie Milroy	Anne Pitkin
Joan Gordon	Antoinette Hewitt*	Rosa Jones	Kathie Lundgren	Mrs. Frank J. Mitchell	Phyllis Pollard
Maggie Gottschalk	Kathleen Higgins	Pat Kalba	Elizabeth Luquiens*	Dorothy Moffitt	Allie Poole
Beatrice Gould	Doris Hill	Jeanie Kashgarian	Doris Lynch	Virginia Moffitt	Roby Pooley
Maria Granquist	Sue Hilles	Becky Elliot Keating	Maryann Lynn	Elizabeth Montgomery	Jean Pope
Elizabeth Grave	Mary-Michelle (Mikey)	Jean Kelley	Kay MacAvoy	Florence Montgomery	Nancy Pope
Marion Graves	Hirschoff	Lillian Kelsey	Margaretta MacDonald	Virginia Montgomery	Anna Porter
Karen Gray	Margaret Hiscock	Una Kernan	Marge MacDonald	Deborah (Debby) Moore	Helen S. Porter
Betty Greene*	Constance Hoadley	Mrs. Chester Kerr	Alison MacLean	Jennifer Moore	Kathy Porter
Karen Greene	Henry-Etta Hoadley	Mrs. Arthur F. Kimberly	Judith Madeux	Carole Morgan	Dorothy Prelinger
Shirley Greenwald	Margaretta Hoadley	Nellie Kimberly	Martha Maguire	Mimi Morris	Kathy Priest
Sandra Greer	Jean Hoagland*	Julia Kingsbury	Katherine Manson	Jennifer Morvan	Danda Prouty
Elizabeth Gregg	Robin Hochstrasser	Lillian Kirby	Amanda Martin	Barbara Munson	Nancy Pugsley
June Greist	Ann Hoefer	Carrie Sutton Kirschner <sup>+</sup>	Carol Martin	Daphne Munson	Jennifer Radford*
Susie Grimes	Katie Hogan	Priscilla Kissick	Edwine Martin	Rosita Murphy	Anna Ramirez
Eugenia Gulliver	Edith Holcomb	Elsbeth Knill-Selby	Marge Martin	Daphne Murray	Stephanie Rank
Lucy Gumbart	Fanny R. Holcomb <sup>+</sup>	Laurie Kolstad	Ruth W. Martin	Amelia Musselman	Jane Rapport
Dorrit Gutterson	Edith Stavey Honey <sup>+</sup>	Mary Lachlan	Tom Martin	Gail Myatt	Dorothy Redway
Robin Hall	Edith (Ede) Houghton Hooker	Billie Ladd*	Edwine Martz	Joan Nast	Joanne Rees
Sondra Haller	Elizabeth R. Hooker	Judy Lahey	Martha May	Bobbie Nelson	Julia Reigeluth
Florence Hamilton	Emily Hooker <sup>+</sup>	Shirley Lamar	Ruby May	Betsy Nicholas	Mary Reigeluth
Pamela Hamilton	Julia Stuyvesant Horner*	Vinetta Lane	Mrs. Thomas R. May	Helen Nicholas	Marge Repplier
Polly Hamilton <sup>+</sup>	Nancy Hoskins	Carol Lang	Nancy McAllister	Joy Nichols	Martine Richards
Alta Jane Bassett Hammer	Margaret (Mar) Hosley*	Geralyn Lawson	Francine McCance	Jim Niederman	Natalie Richardson
Edith Rosamund Hammer	Elizabeth Hotchkiss	Millie Legenhausen	Jennifer McCleery	Betsy Nininger*	Cathleen Riley
Jean Handley	Frances Hotchkiss	Molly LeVan	Pamela McClelland	Betsy Nolan	Mary Ripley
Harriet Harris	Maria Hotchkiss	Helen Lewis	Emly McDiarmid	Leila North	Eleanor Roberts
Joyce Harris*	Caroline Houghton* <sup>+</sup>	Marjorie Lewis	Phyllis McDowell	Liz O'Connor	Helen Roberts
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Ann Smith	Edith May Comstock Thoms	Olive Warner	Danda Wright	
Barclay Smith	Marguerite Tobler	Lois Warnock	Karen Wu	
Ellen Smith	Christine Tocchi	Elizabeth Waterman*	Anna Phillips Wurtenberg	
Jeanne Smith	Catherine Todd	Neil Wattles	Ada Watterson Yerkes	
Juliet Smith	Vera Todd	Betsy Weber	Hollis Yerkes	



## CREDITS

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Inside cover: flora illustrations from *Long Wharf Nature Preserve Teacher's Manual*, prepared by the New Haven Land Trust in cooperation with the Garden Club of New Haven, 1999

p. 6: (*Sedum reflexum* 'Blue Spruce,' *Lavandula x intermedia* 'Phenomenal,' and *Festuca glauca* 'Boulder Blue'): Deborah Moore

p. 8: (*Tulipa x gesneriana* Parrot Group): Terri Burditt

p. 10: "Florence Bradley," by F.A. Bowman, New Haven. Courtesy of the Moakley Archive, Suffolk University

p. 22: (Phelps Triangle Park): Mary-Michelle Hirschhoff; edited clipping of the 1888 *Atlas of the City of New Haven, Connecticut*, ca. 1930. New Haven Museum, Dana Collection; and "The Home of Prof. William Lyon Phelps as in 1937," 1937. New Haven Museum, Dana Collection

p. 25: "Color Wheel," by Emma DeBow Creadick and Edward Parrish, 1938. New Haven Museum, Records of the Garden Club of New Haven

p. 26 (elm tree): Terri Burditt

p. 30: *Residence of A.N. Skinner, Hillhouse Avenue, New Haven*, by John William Orr after J.F. Runge, 19th century. Wood engraving. Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of the Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes,

B.A. 1896, M.A. (Hon.) 1900, LL.D. 1921. 1929.779.85

p. 35: "Curious American Bog-Plants," by Sen. R. A. Reinagle, from *Temple of Flora, or Garden of the botanist, poet, painter, and philosopher*, by Robert John Thornton (London, 1812). Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Folio 65

p. 36: "The Apple Tree Blossom," from *A select collection of one hundred plates...*, by John Edwards (London, 1775), plate 12. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. SSi7X 775E

p. 42 (*Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Forever and Ever Together'): Ellen Smith

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