

FLOWER POWER WEEKEND



2023 ANNUAL HIDDEN GARDENS TOUR • JUNE 4



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WELCOME

The gardens and natural wonders that Mt. Airy Learning Tree has been privileged to present in its annual Hidden Garden Tour (HGT) have never actually been hidden. Private? Most often. Secluded? Indeed. But they can never be truly tucked away because gardeners are by nature sharers. Sure, their labors can be solitary, but the very notion of blooming impels the gardener to cry out “Look at this!”

As we looked back over previous HGT brochures in preparation for this year’s tour, we realized that what has been hidden in our descriptions is not the gardens but the gardeners. Accordingly, we have tried in 2023 to introduce to you here planters as well as plants. We found astounding in our prospecting for this year’s lineup the intricate, intimate web of interconnections between and among the presenting gardeners. People sharing ideas, trading plants, offering flowers. Those connections are surely but the tip of the tulip. All about us, knowledge and plant materials are being freely exchanged and seeds disseminated. Our gardeners are pollinators as surely as birds and bees. The connections are manifold and too numerous to cite. Many are invisible and even unknowable. But rest assured, it is unlikely that any established garden in our community is unrelated or autonomous.

That understanding informs our sense of community. We are one big garden. And we know that what makes the Hidden Garden Tour a perennial success is that we are one big community of sharers.



One of the many beauties of the HGT is that it is self-paced and self-guided. You may find that the sequence we’ve listed can abbreviate travel time and save energy, but think of the sequence as circular, not linear. Starting out, say, at the second, third or sixth listed garden can reduce congestion and enhance your enjoyment.

Bicycling the Tour is an enjoyable way to immerse yourself in the full outdoor experience and certainly simplifies parking. At Ned Wolf Park we’ll have stationed savvy cycling enthusiasts who can offer suggestions for safe and scenic bike routes.



NED WOLF PARK

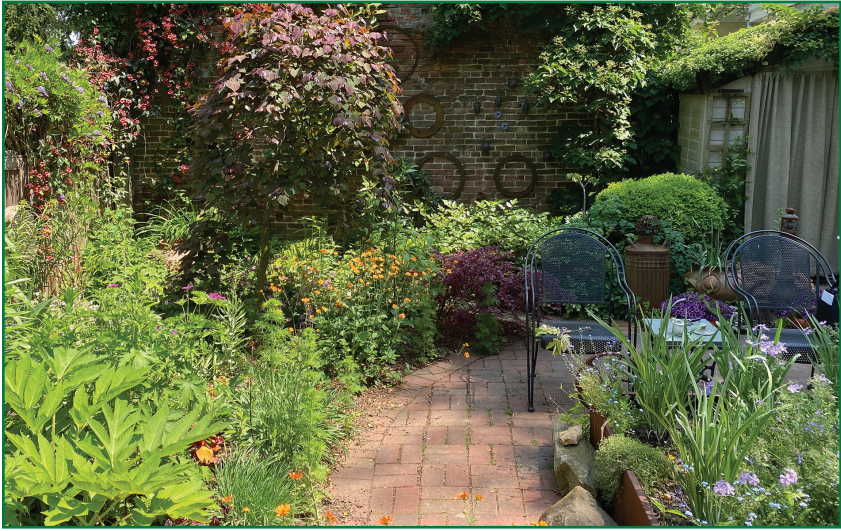
Southwest Corner, McCallum and West Ellet Streets

Once again, Mt. Airy Learning Tree is privileged to present Ned Wolf Park as this year's point of entry to our Hidden Garden Tour. Sixteen years ago a Friends group adopted this then-neglected, half-century old "pocket park" and began its gradual rehabilitation. Today it's a cherished community oasis and gathering place funded and maintained by neighbors, many of whose home gardens reflect the same creative energies and care that have made this park a small botanic marvel.

A pleasing array of drought-tolerant shrubs, perennials and flowering plants prepares the eye for the rich ornamental displays you will encounter on your Tour. Plant lists and maps at both ends of the path that winds through the park can serve as a primer to inspire creativity, encourage notions of sustainability, and illustrate concepts of landscape design.

**Enjoy a guided tour of the park between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm
by Susie Bash, a member of the Friends of Ned Wolf Park.**

Please Park on McCallum or West Ellet Streets.



CARPENTER - DONEGAN GARDEN

6929 Greene Street, West Mt. Airy

Anyone familiar with sculptor Syd Carpenter and artist Steve Donegan’s “La Cresta,” their creative collaboration at Woodmere Art Museum, will want to view their home garden — also a masterly blend of art and horticulture. Hidden Garden guests may recollect past tours to the stunning surround of their late-19th-century Mansard twin at the corner of Green and Sedgwick. Though the location and structural design of the outdoor garden rooms will be familiar, the ever-changing arrangement of color, texture, space, ornament and dappled sunlight—the avocation of three decades—makes one believe in the idea of progress and invites repeated visits.

Slopes of variegated perennials and shrubs spill to the sidewalks. Up the steps, trellises, climbing roses, and star magnolia thrive beneath mature maples and cedar. Crafted objects, tile work and natural stone paths invite the eye. Flying things flutter about the native plants and puzzle at the occasional tropical. Borders of the pathways in the intimate back garden burst abundantly in a garden that has been molded into a botanical extension of their domicile.

Please Park on Greene or Sedgwick Streets.



JANICK NATURAL HABITAT

611 West Hortter Street, West Mt. Airy

Throughout human history gardens have been designed to please humans aesthetically. Thus, many of the plants that Hidden Garden Tour participants will view are non-native. They have become popular precisely because local insects do not recognize them as food. But a robust insect population is a great protein source for birds. John Janick, schooled as a biologist, likes birds—and therefore bugs, and therefore native plants. In fact, he has developed his passion into a thriving nursery business called Good Host Plants and has become a knowledgeable, well-known advisor to neighbors seeking to create sustainable natural habitats, expand biodiversity, and promote a healthy ecology. MALT is pleased to announce that John will be teaching with us this fall.

Approaching the property on Hortter, the walkway/driveway splits in three directions. Take the middle gravel path. Follow the butterflies to the blooming spring wildflower garden near the natural pond at the front of the Janicks' home. Join the pollinators and flying feeders and enjoy foxglove and long-sepal beardtongue, milkweed, pink evening primrose, sundrops, blue flag iris, copper iris, winecups and more.

Please park along Hortter Street and walk up the shared driveway.



WYCK GARDEN AND URBAN FARM

6026 Germantown Avenue, Germantown

There's nothing parochial about calling Philadelphia America's garden capital, and a good case can be made for nominating Wyck as that capital's historic epicenter. Occasionally the city of "firsts" is also the locus of "lasts." The Wyck Historic House's Rose Garden is the oldest in its original plan in America, a tribute to the tenacity of the roses and the family's near three-century stewardship. And the roses are in bloom—gloriously! Here grow Old World roses that would never have thought to last so long. Come behold a probable sport of one of the original China roses that brought repeat blooming to the Western rose world, a horticultural revolution a half-century after our political one. Be sure to avail yourself of a Rose Garden map and key.



But do not be captivated by the roses alone. Visit the South Lawn and its ancient tulip poplar, horse chestnut trees, and pawpaw grove. Covering nearly a quarter of the 2-1/2 acre historic site, the Wyck Home Farm features beds for diverse vegetables, flowers, perennial herbs and fruit crops. The farm is cultivated and cared for by the local Germantown community. Join the Home Farm Club Tuesdays and Fridays - an excellent reason to return to Wyck! MALT is delighted to promote the Germantown Historic District and Wyck, one of the nation's most authentic historical sites.

Enter from West Walnut Lane.

Parking along Germantown Avenue is free on Sundays.

DAYLILIES

30 West Walnut Lane
Germantown

As summer unfolds be sure to return to the corner of West Walnut Lane and McCallum Street to enjoy the bountiful array of daylilies, compliments of Angel Flores and his gardener Sharif Buford.





SARGENT – WILLIAMS GARDEN

421 East Mt. Airy Avenue, East Mt. Airy

Pity not the constant gardener who moves to a new property and confronts fallow ground. Trowelers, like novelists, prefer to design their own plots. One cannot inherit perfection and aspire to progress. Brandon Sargent and Austin Williams were deprived of that problem. Busy professionals (architect and surgeon) with scant horticultural background but lots of youthful energy, they began their gardening experience removing an extensive grove of recalcitrant bamboo from behind their manse. Installing a modest swimming pool, they unearthed schist slabs the size and shape of right whales. You will find them (the stones, not the gardeners) stacked aside the yard. Snipping tulips? Later!

The yard, a luxurious lawn with challenging dimples of sunlight and shade, demanded ornamental relief everywhere all at once, not right to left in slow progression. The novice gardening team met the challenge by establishing borders and island oases throughout the grounds, making their habitat at once complete and yet assuredly evolving. Enter the property to the left of the house, inspect the anatomy of yet unburied drip irrigation systems, ponder the designed rain pools, admire the remote apiary (the docile honeybees seem un-busy), and marvel at the difficult ease of acquiring gardening savvy.



THOMAS GARDEN

7409 Crittenden Street, East Mt. Airy

Gardens impress and inspire. Also they intimate, revealing subtly and allusively the motivations of the gardener. Janet Thomas, who lives in the carriage house that was once part of the vast Gowen Estate, does nothing for show. For two score decades she has cared for the garden that was originally a private arboretum for “the main house.” She digs her hands in the dirt for the pleasure of digging, prefers the color white to the primary splashes, and selects plants for their soft textures and intoxicating fragrances. The pathways through her garden are paved with memories that insure the paths’ consistency. She has never redesigned her garden. It has evolved, she says, as she has. She and her garden have acquired mutual trust. Gardeners who have never visited will sense the conspiracy and feel comfortable there.

Enter up the drive from the right of the house and pass by the sweet bay magnolia. Lilacs and azalea nestle beneath Japanese maple, dogwoods and weeping cherry. Shade has always dictated the garden’s complexion. Ferns, hostas and hellebores are its mainstays. Perennials compatibly abound. It’s a garden made for living, which she happily shares. The hammock, however, is reserved.

Street parking is ample.



SCHNEIDER GARDEN

8235 Crittenden Street, Chestnut Hill

In 1954 architect William E. Lunt, Jr., designed an 1,800 square-foot “mid-century modern” to wrap around a now towering century-old sweet gum. But until the Schneiders took possession of the property in 1989, nothing much wrapped around the house itself. Nina Schneider began changing that almost immediately. A decade later the gardening challenge prompted her to change her career from architect to landscape designer. Visitors will appreciate the switch. What she calls her ever-changing laboratory blooms as a constant delight.

A densely bordered streetscape announces the property. Walk the gently rising drive and enter the gate immediately on the right into a garden foyer featuring andromeda and native azalea. Pass by the fountain and between twin urns, sentries to the newly planted south-side gravel garden. Directly behind the house, a 60-foot diameter circle provides an ordered symmetry against which a profusion of shapes and colors perfectly protests. So lush in variety, the garden can almost disguise Nina’s fondness for hydrangeas. Climbing roses in the eastern rear of the garden lift the eye toward a spectacular dawn redwood, planted over three decades ago to mark the birth of this evolving half-acre idea.

Park along the opposite side of Crittenden Street. Enter Crittenden from Evergreen Street rather than Willow Grove Avenue.



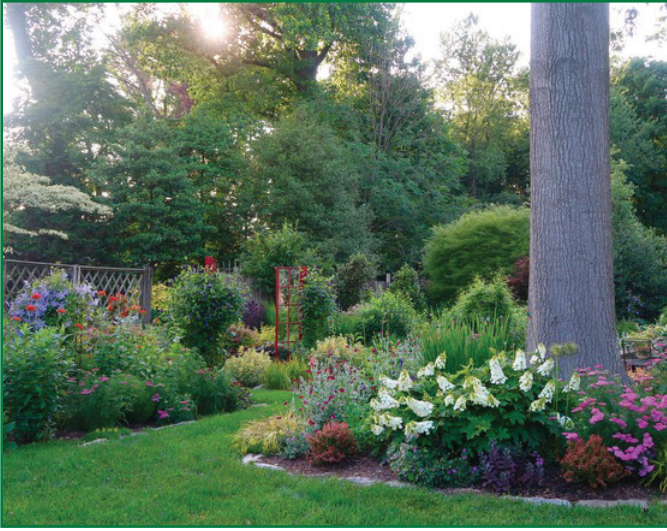
NOVAK – SARNOWSKI GARDEN

19 West Willow Grove Avenue, Chestnut Hill

Chestnut Hillers in near proximity to the Novak-Sarnowski residence routinely go out of their way for the visual indulgence of passing by the exuberantly furnished retaining wall that fronts a famed rock garden alive with rare plants and unusual succulents. For HGT participants, this satisfying experience is but prefatory. Circle the modest-sized house clockwise from the driveway on the left and encounter over 900 different plant species and varieties in one-fifth as many footsteps. Exotic flora thrive on and among other-worldly tufa. Carnivorous and native grassland plants pop from graveled plots. Huge urns display bog plants that would never survive the local terrain. The central backyard is a marvel of orchestrated extravagance. And, yes, there's a veggie and cutting garden.

Eighteen and a half years ago, when the couple moved in, the plot was a virtual blank slate, a *tabula rasa* for the diligent exercise of imagination and intelligence. A self-described “plant nerd” for whom gardening is a serious avocation, Janet Novak is widely recognized as a botanical authority who gives freely of her time and expertise to horticultural organizations and backyard gardeners alike. *In case of excessive heat, a morning visit to this garden is suggested.*

Parking farther down West Willow Grove Avenue is advised.



FLAHERTY GARDEN

401 West Springfield Avenue, Chestnut Hill

This is the most extensive garden on the Tour; allow time to enjoy it!

The term “hidden garden” seems a misnomer when applied to the masterpiece that Jay and Nanie Flaherty have created on a prominent single-acre corner parcel in Chestnut Hill. Their achieved intent was always to share their evolving creation by radically opening the street-side vantages and designing a four-season garden that brings year-round pleasure to neighbors and passersby. The garden wraps entirely around their Provence-styled house, and one feels assured that the views onto various garden rooms from within are superb.

Such an un-secluded garden is not without its privacies and surprises. Jay Flaherty has an artist’s eye and dramatist’s flair for scene setting. Curving paths into unseen areas create what he calls “anticipatory tension.” One hears water music before finding the fountain. Repurposed objects create trompe d’oeils that provide just the right touch of whimsy to an otherwise elegant canvas. Trellises, stonework, benches, and urns reside in harmony. Nanie’s heirloom tomatoes and vegetables have their own protected camps. The garden’s overall design required a sophisticated artistic understanding of interplay of repetition, color, hue, texture, light and line. It could not have been achieved without commanding horticultural acumen and judicious selectivity.

Park on Springfield Ave. or in the free SEPTA lot at St. Martin’s station.

THANK YOU!

2023 Hidden Gardens

The Friends of Ned Wolf Park, Syd Carpenter and Steve Donegan, John Janick, the Staff and Volunteers at Wyck Historic House and Garden, Sharif Buford, Brandon Sargent and Austin Williams, Janet Thomas, Nina and Eric Schneider, Janet Novack and Chris Sarnowski, and Jay and Eugenie Flaherty,

Flower Power Committee and Garden Docents

John Autin, Susie Bash, Lynn Berkowitz, Peggy Bradley, Deborah Briscoe, Sarah Browning, Lanina Cavicchio, Maggie Chapman, Beth Cooper, Sharon Corbin, Makiko Goto-Widerman, Janet Hoffman, Allison Houghton, Courtney Jewell, Leslie Klinefelter, Paul Lyons, Anne O'Donnell, Marisa Penate, Pat Robinson, Paul Roller, Bob Rossman, Cyndi Skripak, John Stanchak, Anne Swoyer, Pauline Taylor, Rivkah Walton, and Marjorie Winther

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Alexa Strus, *Program Administrator*

Sarah Claxton, *Special Projects*

FLOWER POWER WEEKEND



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Flower Power Gala, June 3

Thank you to the extraordinary **Philly Gumbo** for keeping us dancing, Jewells in Bloom for the beautiful fresh flowers, Attic Brewing for the delicious beer, and Bar Lizette for being our amazing pop-up with your signature cocktails!

Thank you to The Frosted Fox Cake Shop for desserts, Cliveden for hosting our party, Beth Cooper and Anne Swoyer for the delectable hors d'oeuvres, Flaco Best for being our grand Emcee, and Jeffery Sammon for the cool lighting vibe.

Thank you to all of the local businesses and talented Artists who donated items to our silent auction and raffles.

A special thank you goes out to Sarah Claxton, who worked very hard to organize our first ever Flower Power Gala!

This weekend would not have happened without the generous support of our sponsors, and the creative vision of our Flower Power Committee who light up the dance floor and made the evening fun and enchanting.

Annual Hidden Gardens Tour, June 4

Thank you to all of our garden docents who are volunteering at our Annual Tour today!

We are especially grateful for the gardeners who are welcoming us into their glorious creations to share their hidden gems with our attendees. The gardens are a labor of love, and we will always remember this day and our visit.

And to you, our attendees, thank you for joining us and for supporting the mission of Mt. Airy Learning Tree. We are all together, a garden, and a community.

Enjoy Your Tour!

~ Janet Greenwood Gala
Executive Director, Mt. Airy Learning Tree

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Flower Power Gala

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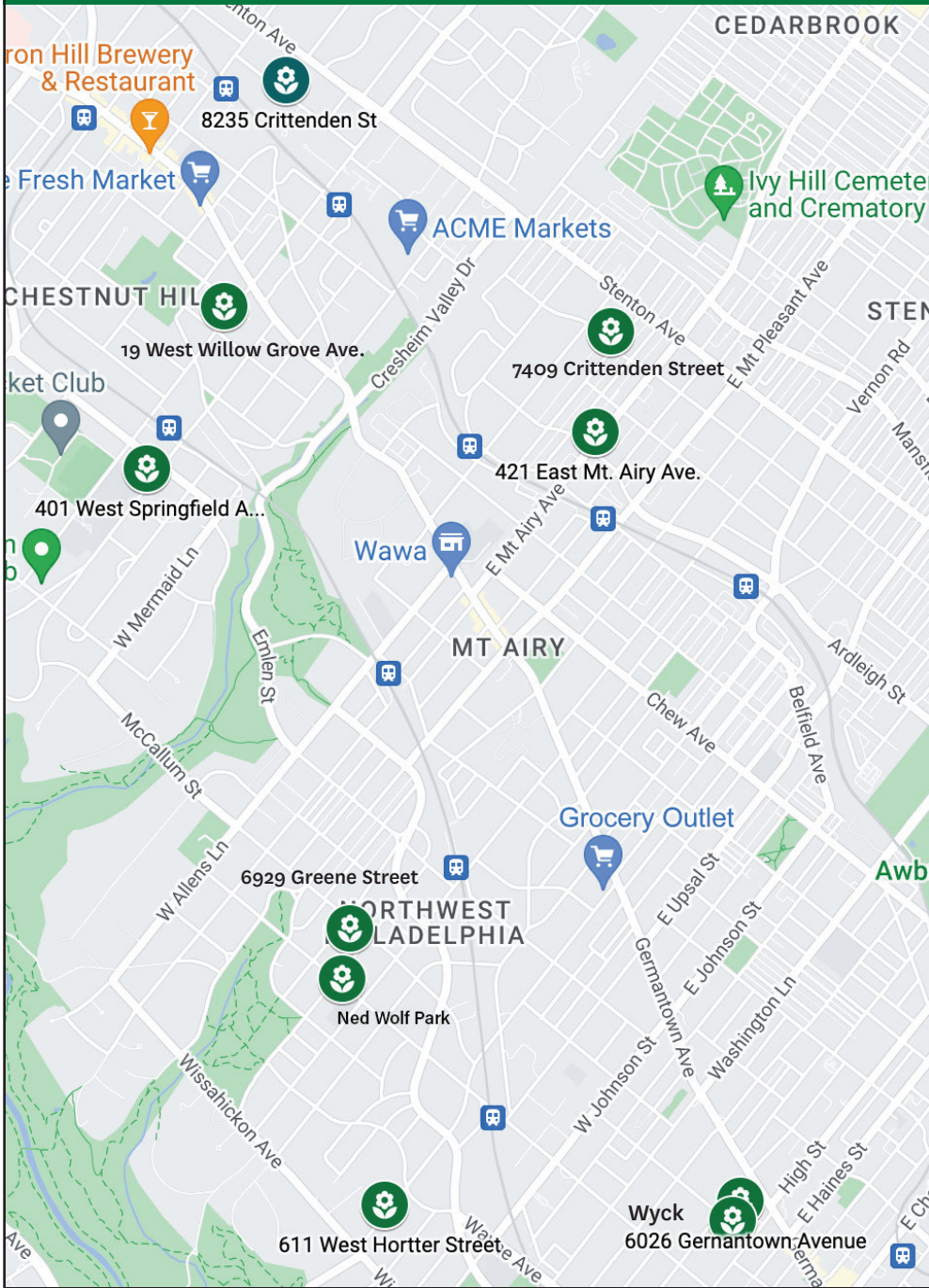


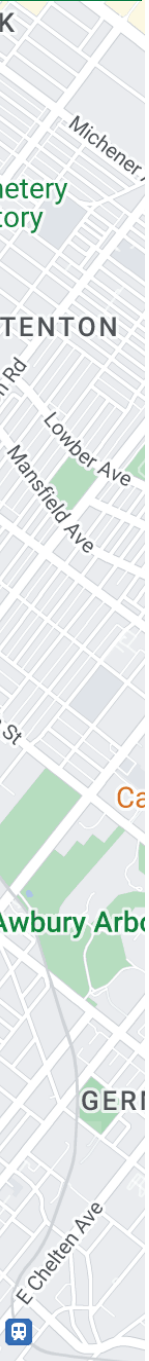




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Ned Wolf Park

7018 McCallum Street, West Mt. Airy
Park on McCallum or West Ellet Streets



Carpenter – Donegan Garden

6929 Greene Street, West Mt. Airy
Park on Greene or Sedgwick Streets



Janick Natural Habitat

611 West Hortter Street, West Mt. Airy
Park along Hortter Street and walk up the shared driveway



Wyck Garden and Urban Farm

6026 Germantown Avenue, Germantown
*Enter from West Walnut Lane.
 Parking along Germantown Ave. is free on Sundays.*



Sargent – Williams Garden

421 East Mt. Airy Avenue, East Mt. Airy
Park on Ardleigh Street or Mt. Airy Avenue



Thomas Garden

7409 Crittenden Street, East Mt. Airy
Street parking is ample.



Schneider Garden

8235 Crittenden Street, Chestnut Hill
Park along the opposite side of Crittenden Street. Enter Crittenden from Evergreen Street rather than Willow Grove Avenue.



Novak – Sarnowski Garden

19 West Willow Grove Avenue, Chestnut Hill
Parking farther down West Willow Grove Avenue is advised.



Flaherty Garden

401 West Springfield, Chestnut Hill
Park on Springfield Ave. or in the free SEPTA lot at St. Martin’s station. Depending on time and temperature, participants planning on touring the Flaherty Garden may wish to take advantage of free, one-stop parking at SEPTA St. Martin’s station.

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Sweet Sassafras



Flowering Dogwood



Spring Cherry Blossom

